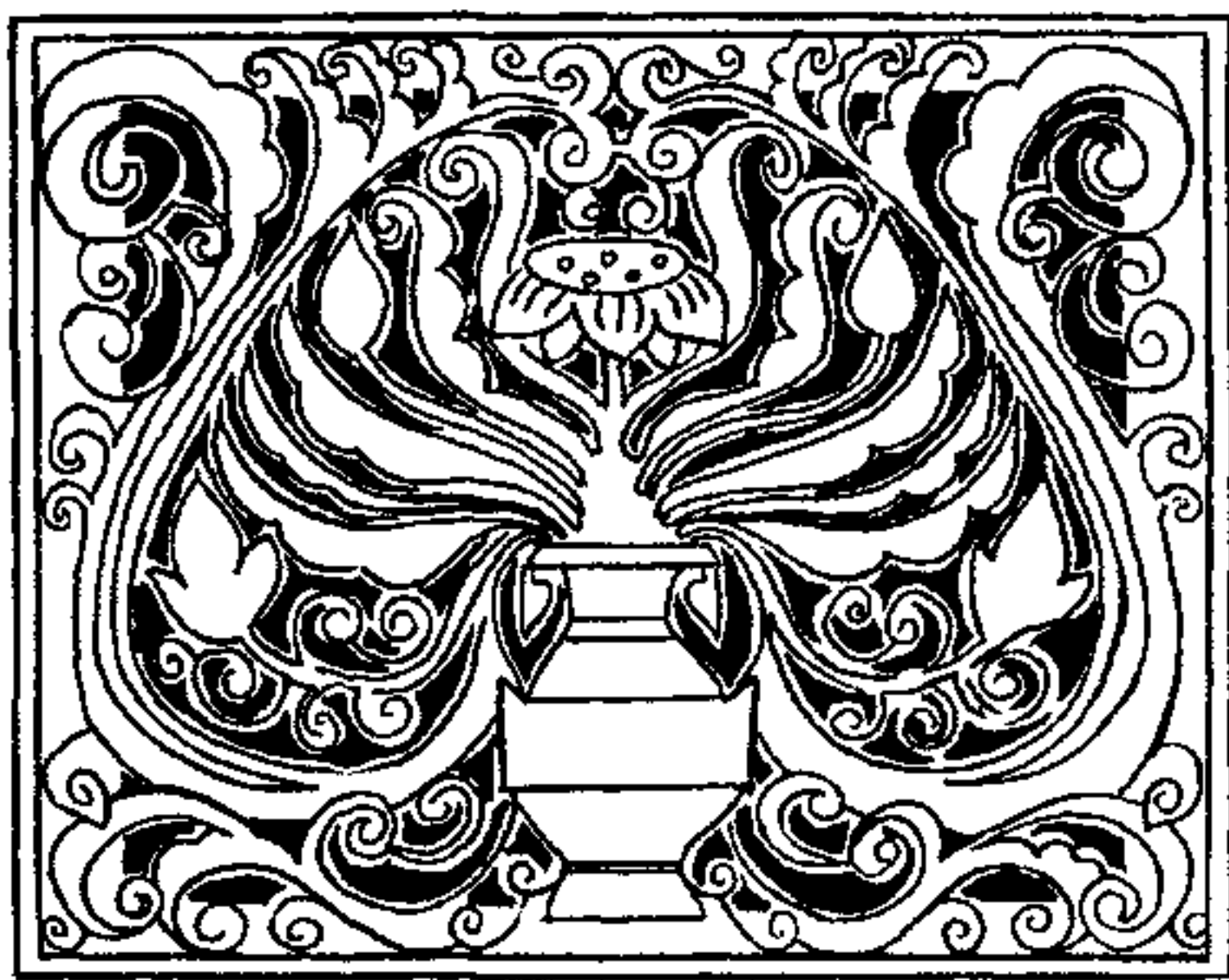




PRABUDDHA BHARATA

A Monthly Journal of the
Ramakrishna Order
started by Swami Vivekananda in 1896

Editorial Office
P.O. Mayavati, Via : Lohaghat
Dt. Pithoragarh 262 524, U.P.

Publication Office
5 Dehi Entally Road
Calcutta 700 014

Phone (91)(33)244 0898
(91)(33)245 2383
(91)(33)226 8000
Fax (91)(33)245 0050
Email: advaita@giasl01.vsnl.net.in



Rates of Subscription

(inclusive of Postage)

	Annual	Life (20 Years)
India	Rs. 45	Rs. 500
Sri Lanka & Bangladesh	Rs. 120	Rs. 2000
U.S.A. & Canada		
<i>Air Mail</i>	\$20	\$300
Other Countries		
<i>Air Mail</i>	£15	£225

Cover: Sri Ramakrishna Temple
Belur Math
Inset: Prayer Hall

APRIL 1998

CONTENTS

Divine Wisdom	273
Fixing the Mind on God-III (Editorial)	274
Scientific View of Religion Swami Ranganathananda	278
Mind According to the East and the West Dr. Ramakrishnarao Vetury	286
Centenary of the Ramakrishna Mission Swami Chetanananda	290
The Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Movement—Its Western Aspect Susan Walters	299
A Footnote to 'Life in Karachi Before and After the Birth of Pakistan' Swami Mukhyananda	304

Continued on the next page

The VOICE of the Voice or The Eloquence of Swami Vivekananda (A Rhetorical Appraisal) <i>Prof. B.N. Sikdar</i>	News and Reports	317
		306

उत्तिष्ठत
जाग्रत
प्राप्य
वरान्निबोधत



PRABUDDHA BHARATA

ARISE! AWAKE! AND STOP NOT TILL THE GOAL IS REACHED

Vol. 103

APRIL 1998

No. 4

Divine Wisdom

THE COMPLETION OF DAKSHA'S SACRIFICE

(Hymns in Praise of Sri Hari)

ऋषय ऊचुः
अनन्वितं ते भगवन् विचेष्टितं
यदात्मना चरसि हि कर्म नाज्यसे।
विभूतये यत उपसेदुरीश्वरीं
न मन्यते स्वयमनुवर्ततीं भवान्॥

The Rishis said: O Lord! Thy ways are mysterious in the extreme! Though Thou art engaged in the creation, preservation and destruction of the universe, with Thyself as its material and instrumental causes, these activities do not affect Thee in the least! And though Śrī, the goddess of wealth and prosperity, whom even the Devas seek eagerly, comes seeking Thee, Thou dost not care a bit for her.

सिद्धा ऊचुः
अयं त्वत्कथामृष्टपीयूषनद्यां
मनोवारणः क्लेशदावाग्निदग्धः।
तृणार्तोऽवगाढो न सस्मार दावं
न निष्क्रामति ब्रह्मसम्पन्नवन्नः॥

The Siddhas said: The elephant of our mind, burning and thirsty in the forest fire of worldly travails, has taken a dip in the

pure nectarine stream of Thy excellences and their recital. It is now completely forgetful of that fire, but it refuses to come out of that blissful river of Thy service, even like one united with Brahman. Thy *Bhajanānanda* is indeed equal to *Brahmānanda* itself!

लोकपाला ऊचुः
दृष्टः किं नो दृग्भिरसद्ग्रहैस्त्वं
प्रत्यग्द्रष्टा दृश्यते येन दृश्यम्।
माया ह्येषा भवदीया हि भूमन्
यस्त्वं षष्ठः पञ्चभिर्भासि भूतैः॥

The Lokapalas said: Thou art the innermost Seer within all beings, by whose presence all objects of perception become manifest. So how can our power of perception, which is fit to grasp only the objects of the world, reveal Thee, the ultimate subject? It is indeed by the power of Thy Maya that Thou, the transcendent sixth sense, appearest as the five sense-objects and their combinations perceivable by the five senses.

Śrīmad Bhāgavatam, 4.7.34,35,37.

Fixing the Mind on God-III

The sign of one's progress towards God is (i) dispassion for the objects of the senses and being established in divine virtues, (ii) love for God, and (iii) faith in God, the holy scriptures, the Guru and the divinity which, being potentially within, struggles to manifest itself. Again, it is with these traits, cultivated as the means, that one progresses towards God.

Dispassion for the World

How does one develop dispassion for the worldly objects? This dispassion has for its basis a sound, discriminating mind. A sharp intellect alone can see the 'defects of sense-objects' as the Yoga-sutras say. We have already seen that running after the sense-objects results in destruction as stated by Sri Krishna in the *Gita*. Again, a keen and observant person can vouch for the fact that nothing in this world of senses is permanent. Sri Ramakrishna emphasizing the impermanence of all worldly objects says that if the world were permanent, he would have covered Kamarpukur with gold. The Holy Mother and Sri Ramakrishna both pointed out that many have been born into every house and in equal number people have died. Bhagavan Buddha too emphasized that objects in the world live but for a short duration. He taught a bereaved mother not to lament for her dear departed child by making her see for herself that there is not a household which death does not visit; he made another see the truth by asking her if she would lament for every death in the village as she did for her own near relative. The Upanishads call upon mankind to find the permanent amongst the evanescent. Nachiketa of the *Katha Upanishad* most emphatically tells King Yama that everything in the world is evanescent. Even that which

lives for a long duration must meet its death one day. Further, Nachiketa points out that the enjoyment of the sense-objects only causes the senses to lose their vigour. We also see that enjoyment of sense-objects leaves a mark in the mind, leaves a longing in the mind for further enjoyment. It is this relish that stimulates further disturbances in the mind even when the objects are not present before us or goads one to run after them like a slave. The difficult part of spiritual life is to cleanse the mind of these relishes. Our minds are already so overcrowded with these relishes that we ought to stop their further increase and work assiduously at eliminating those already present by means of the practice of withdrawal of the mind from the clutches of the sense-objects combined with renunciation by which is meant giving up the lower enjoyment for the higher. There must be a high ideal along with self-restraint; else passions will find another outlet.

Though the scriptures tell us about the defects of sense-objects yet we do not want to understand. Swami Turiyananda tells a beautiful story which illustrates this:

There was a king who promised the gift of half his kingdom to anyone who would teach him the preparation of puffed rice. Many came and explained and demonstrated, but at the end the king would always say that he did not understand. How could he? He simply *would* not! We are also like him. Who does not know that the world is transitory? But we refuse to feel convinced lest

1. Swami Turiyananda in *Spiritual Talks by the First Disciples of Sri Ramakrishna* (Calcutta: Advaita Ashrama, 1991), p. 284. [Hereafter *Talks*].

we also have to give away 'half the kingdom'—the enjoyment of the world.¹

We do not want to understand the defects of sense enjoyments because then we have to give them up and turn our minds to God. We are like the camel in Sri Ramakrishna's parable which wants to eat thorny bushes though its mouth bleeds in the process, or, like that maid who could not get sleep without having her fish-basket sprayed with water and kept near her so that the odour of fish reaches her.

But seeing defects is not enough. Suppose that a man cannot resist the temptation to eat sweetmeats. Even if he is told that it is injurious to his health to consume sweetmeats, he may still say that just one sweetmeat will not harm him very much. Our discrimination is not established and therefore our dispassion is also not firm. Statutory warnings have not dissuaded the so-called rational men and women from behaving in a way that reflects their total lack of rationality. Suppose the man is told that the sweetmeat has perhaps some poisonous insecticide that spilled from a can inadvertently, he at once sees that there is the imminent danger of death and he will not partake of the sweetmeat even if he is assured that it is safe to consume them. Even though we see impermanence and all the other defects stated above, yet we are slow to react if the threat to life is not obvious or is not seen to be immediate. We seem to think that death is not a strange thing, that it visits every living being, that decay is inbuilt in every object in the universe, that the senses will anyway lose their vigour with advance in age, and therefore, there is not much meaning in being so very sensitive about it and becoming 'pessimistic'. Though verbally they profess to be quite aware of the transitory nature of the universe, yet when death visits any member of their household, they are filled with sorrow and anxiety, and act as if they never knew that everything will meet its end some day, sooner or later. On

seeing the decay of the senses and the body, they become concerned as it is an indication of their walking towards their last day on earth. This perception becomes stronger when a person is older. In youth the shadow of decay and death is not even felt. Bhagavan Buddha had the keen perception to see just one instance of disease, old age and death, and these in the lives of others totally unrelated to him, to arrive at the nature of the world around him. We do not understand this simple fact even after seeing many instances of these in our person and in those of our near and dear ones. Spiritual life is not a preparation for living so much as it is a preparation for death, though when one is prepared for death, one is prepared to live well too. Knowing that one day we will have to give up everything, including the body which is so very dear to everyone, one takes to renunciation which is a practice for that eventual day.

The cleansing of the mind by removing all the cobwebs in it is a task that should be taken up in right earnest. One has to summon all one's resolution and rouse oneself determined to do or die. The Buddha-like resolve is needed. This has to be done by the individual who aspires to freedom. Again we have an illustration given by Swami Turiyananda:

There was a king and he had a friend—a holy man. The king would very often say to the friend: 'Just release me from this worldly bondage, just make me free.' The holy man would give him instructions. But yet the king was persistent in his request: 'Just make me free.' One day the holy man firmly caught hold of a pillar and repeatedly began to request the king, 'Friend, just disentangle me.' The king said, 'Why don't you let go the hold?' The holy man replied, 'No, you must disentangle me.' The king replied, 'A great fun indeed; you yourself have clasped the pillar tightly and at will you can leave it off; but no, you will

request me to come to your rescue. Why don't you yourself give it up?' Then the holy man left the pillar and said to the king, 'It is the same case with you. You yourself are clasping the world and yet you constantly request me to release you from it. Why don't you yourself give it up?' The king understood.²

The task of freeing the mind from impurities, of controlling the senses and the mind so that instead of rushing outward they turn inward is to be done by the aspirant. No one else can do this for him nor is there any short-cut. The Holy Mother by asking a pointed question lays stress on what we ought to do:

If the mind is pure, why will not one get concentration? Why will not one see God-visions? After practising Japa for some time, one will find that, as soon as he sits for meditation, the Mantra rises from within spontaneously, without any effort.³

We have therefore to apply ourselves to cultivating the purity of the mind from the moment the recognition of its importance in spiritual life is realized. Without purity of mind, spiritual journey is sure to end in a failure. Says Shankaracharya (*Vivekachudamani*, 79):

The shark of hankering catches by the throat those seekers after liberation who have got only an apparent dispassion and are trying to cross the ocean of *Samsāra*, and violently snatching them (from the pursuit of the knowledge of the ultimate Reality), drowns them half-way.

An impure mind consumes a good amount of our feeble energy in the cleansing operation itself! The mind is naturally in-

clined to doing what is evil and that is an indication that there is in it already much evil. It is therefore disinclined to doing what is good and beneficial. One must, however, strive to do what is good, whenever the mind is so disposed, which also strengthens the desire to do good.

As Duryodhana said, we know what is *adharma* (unrighteous action) yet we are unable to practise restraint, we know what is *dharma* (righteous action) yet we do not have inclination to perform them. Such is the mind-set that we have at the beginning of our spiritual life. But by diligent efforts this mind has to be made pure, for it is the pure mind that perceives God. The inclination to perform righteous deeds and to desist from unrighteous actions has to be cultivated along with the cultivation of a discriminating intellect which can discern what is righteous and what is not. The man lacking in discrimination about what is right and what is wrong only argues that what he has been doing is right, though men of wisdom tell him repeatedly the way to the good and point out to that man why his deeds are unrighteous. A thumb-rule for what is righteous and what is not is: That which is selfish is immoral, and that which is unselfish is moral.

Arjuna compares the control of the 'turbulent, strong and obstinate' senses and the mind to the control of the wind (*Gita*, 6. 34). Swami Turiyananda gives many valuable directions for achieving this:⁴

Control of the senses is not to be brought about by a violent effort. Only by realizing Him is it perfectly achieved. But at first one must struggle for this end. Afterwards it becomes quite natural. Still one should not be over-confident. Just as the intelligent hunter catches a deer and ties it up, so after succeeding in controlling the organs one should be alert and continue to hold the mind and the organs

2. Swami Turiyananda in *Talks*, p. 311.

3. Holy Mother in *Talks*, p. 17.

4. Swami Turiyananda in *Talks*, p. 164.

in check.

*Indriyāṇāṃ hi sarveṣāṃ
yadyekam kṣaratīndriyam;
Tadasya kṣarati prajñāṃ
dṛteḥ pātrādivodakam.*

Even if a single organ is allowed to run out, that alone destroys the aspirant's illumination, like water from a cracked leathern jar. —(Manu, 2.99)

Keeping the palate and the sexual instinct under control, you may live happily anywhere you like.⁵

*Prthivyāṃ yāni bhūtāni
jīvopasthaṇimittakam;
Jīvopasthaparityāge
prthivyāṃ kiṃ prayojanam.*

Every creature on earth seeks the satisfaction of the palate and the sexual instinct. To one who gives up the craving for these, of what avail is anything in this world?

*Tāvajjitendriyo na syād-
vijitānyendriyaḥ pumān;
Na jayedrasanaṃ yāvaj-
jitam sarvaṃ jite rase.*

A man who has controlled all other senses except the palate is not to be considered a master of his senses. When the hankering of the palate is controlled, everything else is controlled. — (Bhāgavata, 11.8.21).

When the palate is controlled, the sex impulse is also controlled. Unless the senses are brought under control, there cannot be any spiritual progress.... 'Therefore, O best of the Bharatas, control thou the senses first, and thereby kill this sinful propensity of lust, which destroys one's Knowledge and Realization.' (Gita, 3.41)

Again, the control of the palate is important since the mind and the body are both interrelated. If the stomach is upset, or the

body is sick in any other way, the mind too gets upset, meditation becomes distasteful, and one does not feel like putting in any effort at all. Hence, many restrictions are placed upon a spiritual aspirant about food, work, and rest. One must be balanced in the food intake—the quality and quantity—the amount of work done—the duration, how very strenuous and the spirit—, as also in the leisure he enjoys—defining leisure as a change of occupation and not mere idleness.

By food one means not merely food taken in through the mouth, but also food taken in through the senses. The food taken in through the mouth disturbs the health of the body and consequently the health of the mind. The food taken in through the senses disturbs the mind directly by agitating it and stimulating even those relishes that lie buried deep within. Too much of strenuous work, too much concern and anxiety at the work site, a lack of the proper spirit in the performance of work, all these have their bad effects. The work we do often disturbs us in our meditation, though, curiously, the God on whom we meditate seldom finds a place when we are engaged in our work. It is an art to introduce the God element in every moment of our existence. Too much of rest is harmful also. The mind, when it is idle, invites all sorts of devilish thinking. Some light engagement is always preferable to total rest. Upon the need for moderation Swami Turiyananda was very emphatic:

People follow their own whims and fail to get good results. The scriptures are there; but they won't look at them. Nor would they listen to the teacher. In the end they become unfit for Yoga. 'One who is moderate in food and pastime, in his effort for work, and in sleep and wakefulness—for such a man, Yoga puts an end to all miseries.' (Gita, 6.17)⁶

(Continued on page 316)

5. Swami Turiyananda in *Talks*, pp. 160-3.

6. Swami Turiyananda in *Talks*, p. 205.

Scientific View of Religion^{*}

SWAMI RANGANATHANANDA

What follows is a transcript of a talk Revered Maharaj gave at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology several years ago. The talk is as relevant today as it was when it was delivered, and points out that religion is not mere belief in a doctrine or a dogma, but it is as scientific as any other science.

Says Revered Maharaj, 'we started the physical sciences with a particular dictum: science destroys fear. The primitive man lived in fear of Nature. When he began to understand Nature, that fear vanished.' But it is unfortunately true that 'in spite of overcoming our fears in the external world, we have not overcome all fear.' Further, 'the more scientific a people, the more fear oppresses them.'

The reason for this state of affairs is that 'physical sciences do not give man a hold on the whole of reality.' The area left out by the sciences that deal with external nature and which needed to be studied by the same scientific outlook and method as employed in the study of external nature, is religion: the study of the internal nature of man. The new-born babe is curious to know what is the physical environment into which it has been ushered. The scientist of today in his grey hairs still looks at it with equal wonder and bewilderment confessing his failure to get a stable world-view!

More fundamental and challenging than the mystery of this external universe is the mystery of man himself, the participator in any observation. There is a profound mystery hidden within man which must be solved. And when that is solved, all earlier conclusions relating to the external world will be found provisional and not final. Says Revered Maharaj, 'that message of tat-tvam-asi is the great message that modern humanity needs for stabilizing itself in this most unstable world of ours....'

'Today the whole humanity needs that spiritual stimulus so that the great wealth of physical science can be matched by a comparable spiritual wealth within man himself. That is a beautiful combination, a desirable combination. And the modern age is just ready, just fitted, for this tremendous advance into the deeper levels of existence—to the heart of reality.'

The Growth of Scientific Thinking in Science and Religion

When we take this subject, the scientific view of religion, we must also remember that there is such a thing as a scientific way of science itself. The sciences also began as little superstitions—for instance—we had alchemy as the beginning of chemistry. Later, in the modern period, man developed the scientific method to study physical nature, and he built up the physical sciences

leading to the present advanced understanding of the nature's forces. Similarly, when we deal with religion, the same applies to the method of study religion adopted over the ages.

Religion began with magic and various superstitions. Later it became creedal, dogmatic. Even when the sciences developed in the West, religion continued to be dogmatic, creedal, with a good deal of superstition also in its beliefs, and such a religion obstructed the progress of science all the time. This is all recent history. In this post-war period, we are having a second look at religion. What is this profound subject of religion? In spite of tremendous developments in the physical

* We are grateful to Revered Swami Atma-ramanandaji for editing this speech and communicating it to us for publication in *Prabuddha Bharata*.

sciences, man's curiosity and interest in religion has not lessened but has only deepened.

Science, a Search for Truth, Destroys Fear

We started the physical sciences with a particular dictum: science destroys fear. The primitive man lived in fear of Nature. When he began to understand Nature, that fear vanished. We can control the forces of Nature, use them for the good of man. In this context, what place does religion hold in human thinking and interest? We have one remarkable phenomenon today which needs to be understood before we can understand the subject of religion, and that is, in spite of overcoming our fears in the external world, we have not overcome *all* fear. Fear is still a constant experience of man today. Fear, out of which comes all tension and all unfulfilment, is a fact of daily experience—the more scientific a people, the more fear oppresses them.

What is this due to? It is here that we get a new approach to the whole subject of both science and religion. Physical sciences destroy some fear, but not all fear, because physical sciences do not give man a hold on the *whole* of reality. Reality is not exhausted by physical sciences. Science is universal, but physical science becomes limited by the very adjective 'physical'. We reduce the area of search for truth; for, science is a sincere, critical search for truth. In order to free ourselves from this limitation placed on the area of search, we have to extend our horizon of search to further fields. It is just as Edington said: 'If you catch fish with a particular net with a particular mesh, whatever you get in that net will be subject to the size of the mesh. You won't get anything smaller in that net.' Physical science is such a net. It takes reality according to its own mesh, leaving many things untouched.

Since that is so, how shall we extend that scientific search? It is this question that brings us to this profound theme of religion. But this approach to religion is something

new in the western tradition. All these hundreds of years, the western approach to religion was dogmatic, creedal, unscientific, and often anti-scientific. That was the experience of the West. Today, that tradition has spread throughout the world. Even in the eastern countries, including India as well, people have started thinking that religion and science are contradictory to each other, that there is nothing besides physical science. But when you study ancient Indian tradition, you find quite a different situation prevailed then. Then science was a search for truth in the *whole* of experience. In the physical sciences, we restrict our seeking to the sensory data: whatever reality comes to me through my sensory system, I study those. Reality, however, is not exhausted by this sensory reading.

*Religion, the Scientific Study of
the Internal Nature of Man:*

A Relentless, All-Renouncing Quest for Truth

What then is the other area that remains to be studied by the same scientific outlook and method? It is the study of the internal nature of man. That is how India approached the subject of religion very early in her long history: as rigorous and scientific in approach as the scientific approach to the study of physical Nature. What is the nature of that approach? Search for truth, not search for a dogma or for a consoling idea: 'IS IT TRUE?' That scientific search for truth resulted in that immortal literature known as the Upanishads.

One of the famous writers in America, R. Hume, translating the thirteen principal Upanishads says in his introduction to the book: 'The single-minded search for truth is one of the commendable features of the Upanishads.' Similar views have been expressed by others as well, including Max Müller who said: 'Here you are in the presence of great minds to whom truth was the only passion, and because of that single-minded passion for truth, they could pursue truth with a mind which you will hardly

find anywhere except in present-day physical science.' Again, he says, 'the sages of the Upanishads could pursue truth with such single-minded devotion because they had no public to please or critics to appease.... And in this pursuit they were prepared to sacrifice everything.'

'Everything' included the thing most difficult to sacrifice, namely the ego. Even this little self in man has to be sacrificed in the search for truth. That is something extraordinary. It is easy to sacrifice wealth or other things, but to sacrifice this presiding entity within the organic system is extremely difficult. But these sages could sacrifice everything. Then they had the other boldness which we find rarely in the history of religion in any other part of the world. It was to ask their national religion, or traditional religion, and all its gods if they were true. If they could not prove their truth, they were discarded without a tear. That is the boldness and intrepidity of the sages of the Upanishads. Then what did they do? With a trained mind, they studied the world around them.

When a baby is born, it is aware of an environment outside of itself, an environment that impinges upon its five sense organs. And that child is puzzled: what is this, what is this world? That is the beginning of the scientific quest for knowledge of reality. The first reality that comes to us is this physical universe, through our sense organs. The child tries to understand that world—gently, steadily. In the beginning it is a confusion. Our great philosopher and psychologist of Harvard University, William James, refers to the child's reaction to the external world: to a new-born child the world is 'a buzzing, booming confusion'. Out of this confusion, it creates knowledge by the same methods which later on he as a scientist perfects: classification. Trying to understand each particular item, it classifies them, grips them—it understands the mother, the voice of the mother, the voice of the father,

and so on. By understanding a thing, it gets a grip on it. It is this simple elementary process which becomes highly diversified, developed, in a great scientist when he tries to clear the mystery which is the external world.

Today too we ask that question, a question that was asked by the sages of the Upanishads ages ago: what is this world? It is a profound mystery to the child. But has it ceased to be a mystery to the greatest scientist of today? No, it is still a mystery. We know so much *about* it, we can *control* it, but we don't know *what* is its *real* meaning. That is the conclusion the physical sciences have arrived at today, that—quoting our great scientist Einstein—'the progress of physical science in the twentieth century has become reduced to the extraction of one incomprehensible from another incomprehensible.' That is the situation with respect to knowledge in the physical world, in physical science. But a great conclusion is arrived at by the great thinkers of today which is the conclusion that the ancient sages arrived at, and that is more fundamental and challenging than the mystery of this external universe: it is the mystery of man himself. There is a profound mystery hidden within man which must be solved. And when that is solved, all other conclusions relating to the external world will be found provisional and not final.

This was the situation that obtained at the time of the Upanishads. And these sages asked this fundamental question: 'What is this observing mind? What is the observer? What is the nature of this man as the Self?' Behind this understanding were long years of search, and religion gave a God 'somewhere in Nature' and He was worshipped in different ways and under different names. The Cosmos, the challenge of the Cosmos, gave man not only the physical sciences but also religion—what we call theological religion. We just suppose that there is a God 'there' and argue for His

reality. But the sages of the Upanishads discovered that any argument for an external God could be countered by another argument against His existence. It is therefore purely a speculative God. We need Him, but we can't understand Him—whether He is real, whether He is true. So God remains merely as a belief.

A belief not founded on truth, however, cannot satisfy serious minds. Thomas Huxley expressed a real search of truth when he said, 'the most sacred act of a man's life is to be able to say and to feel that what I believe is true.' On that you have all the penalties and joys of life. You have to struggle hard to answer this question. If you answer it, you are immensely benefited. Any fool can say, 'I believe, I believe.' It requires a highly trained mind to be able to say that what it believes in is true. That is a great attitude of mind. We respect physical sciences because they cultivate this attitude. We respect the great Upanishads because they cultivated this attitude ages ago.

What is Truth?

What I believe in is true, but what is truth? We have not asked this question seriously in physical science. We are asking that question now. We asked it once, in the New Testament, when Pilate asked but got no answer. We cannot search for truth if we do not know in the first place what is meant by truth. In the physical sciences we only saw sensory data and we asked this question, 'Are you true?' Then they gave way to something deeper and still deeper. It is all sensory data only, but nevertheless, we get a more firm foundation for our belief in truth. A belief which is true is a great power. A mere belief has no energy within it. So the capacity to subject a belief to critical examination and create truth out of it is greatly challenged in physical science and in religion as understood in the Hindu tradition—in the great Upanishads.

From this we proceed to a definition given in the Upanishads about truth and

untruth. What is untruth? Anything that is fleeting, anything that is changing, is untrue. If there is anything changeless behind the changing, then we shall take that changeless thing as true. We find that nothing is changeless in the world; everything is changing. World is one of changes. That is one of the biggest conclusions arrived at by the great sages of the Upanishads. Can we, from this, come to the conclusion that there is no reality? The sages of the Upanishads stated that we cannot come to that hasty conclusion. We have not studied all aspects of reality, all aspects of experience. Until we study the whole of experience, we have no right to conclude that the world is without an abiding reality within itself. Why is it so? Our sages said: 'There is one whole range of experience which you have not touched at all. You have touched only the limited experience of sensory data and on the basis of that you say that everything is changing. Until you turn your searchlight of inquiry into the rest of experience, it will not be scientific to conclude that there is no unchanging truth in the world.' It was at this stage that the sages of the Upanishads turned their attention, in the light of this suggestion, to that area which has been always a *terra incognita* in our investigation, namely, the observer.

The Religious Quest

One of the students in the Upanishads goes to his teacher and puts this question to him: 'Sir, teach me that Self, which is immediate and direct in experience, which is the Self in all. Is there any reality which is the Self of all, which is immediate and direct, which one can experience? If so, you tell me that.' From then on it is a new type of investigation, with the same thoroughness, the same rational spirit, the same scientific spirit, but the field of investigation was different. Till now it was sensory data that was investigated. Now, they turned their attention from the external to the internal. Today when I use the word 'internal', it has got the

sanction among several scientific writers, who too, say that Nature has not only an external but also an inward dimension. It was Teilhard de Chardin who made this familiar in his book, *The Phenomenon of Man*, that Nature has a 'within' to itself, not only a 'without'. In fact, today's approach gives certain concepts and terminologies which are mere repetitions of what we have in the Upanishads. Chardin himself suggests that the concept of energy, which is so dominant in the physical sciences, has to be clarified. Energy is one, but it has different aspects. External energy, studied by the sciences, is one aspect of energy. He calls it 'tangential' energy. There is another inward type of energy, energy that moves the bio-system—the heart, the mind and the senses—which he calls 'radial' energy. What is that energy? Of course, we can answer in the language of physical science, we can say that the physical food that I eat gets converted into energy and that moves the senses. These superficial answers do not answer the question adequately, because when you try to answer that question you enter a different territory. That is the area covered in the Upanishads. Extreme caution in judgement and extreme keenness in investigation are required while dealing with that question. The Upanishadic answer is this: The psychophysical energy which you turned outside can be unified and turned inward to find out the truth about the inner world. That is a great technique: by turning in, the human mind can be made very penetrating. We see this light, a diffused radiation. Still, this very radiation which cannot penetrate matter, when it is given a particular treatment, becomes capable of penetrating matter. Similarly, the human mind, which is scattered, can be so trained that it can penetrate not only the world outside but the inner world of man also. Exploration is the method by which we found new truths in external nature. Continue that very exploration in this area of the inner nature of man which has so

far been neglected. This is the foundation of the claim that there is such a thing as a science of religion, not merely a belief.

So, let us turn our attention to the inner side of Nature. Look at the solar or the galactic objects. You see there the external of Nature. But in that perception of the external there is an internal. The real internal you do not find anywhere in those objects there, but you find the internal aspect of Nature raising itself when evolution passes from Cosmic to the organic dimension. When the living cell appeared, Nature revealed her inner nature. Biology calls it the first great breakthrough in evolution. That matter becomes self-duplicating; matter shows a sense of freedom within itself to direct its life according to its own will. Put a little virus near a living cell, and it tries to protect itself. Such an elementary occurrence, yet full of significance because Nature is showing its inner dimension in that living cell. It is this inner dimension, so rudimentary in that living cell, that becomes clearly defined when evolution advances step by step, until man comes upon the scene. In man, that inner dimension is an absolute fact, it is a real datum. If you ignore it, you do so at your own cost.

Man has a self. This ego in all of us is a profound datum. It is only in the last few decades that even biology has begun to recognize the speciality of this great datum and its great significance in evolution. The sun has no ego, the stars have no ego. Some new dimension has come in man and that dimension, the centre of the self, is something profound, of great significance because man dominates Nature by virtue of this new dimension. But he has not yet fully answered the question, What is this new dimension? It is this investigation that is going to be highly rewarding for man in this age. It is this method that the Upanishads adopted to bring the science of religion into the scientific fold. Let us make religion scientific, let us search for truth, anything unchanging, in

man himself. This little self in man shows tremendous possibilities; let us go deep into it.

That is how an inward investigation with a trained mind started in the Upanishads, and that is described in one verse of that great Upanishad, the *Kaṭha-Upaniṣad*: *Parāṇcikhāni vyatṛṇat svayambhūḥ, tasmāt parāṇi paśyati nāntarātmā; kaścid-dhīraḥ pratyag-ātmānam-aikṣat, āvṛtta cakṣuḥ amṛtatvam-icchāt*. The verse says: Nature, or Nature's God, has constructed this human organic system with an initial defect—see the language, 'with an initial defect'. What is that defect? An outgoing disposition. And because of that it can seek facts outside, truth outside, not within itself. But the question arose, 'Can we not change this area of search? Can we not give an inward turn to this psycho-physical energy that goes out?' Normally, not many can do this. You can all try it; it is very difficult; it is like making a river flowing eastward turn its course and go westward; very great effort is needed. But the Upanishad tells you that men dared even this challenge. A certain heroic soul, says the verse, took up the challenge: Why should my sensory system and mind go only outward? Why should I not try to find what is within? I shall do it. What did he do? In the language used here, he gave a complete right-about turn to his entire psycho-physical energy system. What was his objective? Just to get the answer to that question, Is there anything abiding in this world of change? I could not find it anywhere outside, but I will not say 'yes' or 'no' until I have sought it in this area, the inner side of man. With that firm determination he gave his energies an inward direction, a complete right-about turn. And what was his joyous surprise when he discovered his own immortal, infinite dimension by that great search! Ordinary people cannot do that; it needs a wise, intelligent, heroic soul. His joy was wonderful, he discovered the immortal Self behind the mortal self, the infinite Man

behind the finite man.

This tiny ego, held up by this organic system, controlled by it, limited in its vision, is something infinite at its very base. That is the discovery that is highlighted in all the Upanishads. This human mind can do wonderful things—not only land a man on the moon but also peel away the veil of ignorance that covers the real Man and projects him as the limited man. The sense-limited man knows himself to be highly limited. But that is not the whole truth. There is an infinite power behind the finite. The immortal and the mortal are both hidden in all of us. By the pursuit of delusion you get the mortal; by pursuit of truth you get the immortal. That pursuit of truth with which you began the physical sciences, continue that pursuit of truth in the other field of investigation; don't leave it untouched. Then you will rise to the highest level of knowledge and wisdom. There is the infinite Man behind the finite man. Finite man is a creature—in spite of all the scientific knowledge, we are still creatures. Our happiness and misery depend upon external events. That is the meaning of being a creature. But this state can be transcended. You can be free. That is the beginning of a scientific tradition in religion.

The Changeless

in the Midst of the Ever-changing

Throughout the centuries, great teachers came up and re-authenticated this tradition. One of the greatest who came after the Upanishads was Buddha, who investigated and discovered both the truths: the changing external nature and the changeless eternal within. Buddha used very precise words for these: *loka* and *lokottara*, respectively. *Loka* means the world revealed by the senses and *lokottara* means what is above it. These two constitute the whole of reality. Reality is constituted of the changing and the changeless. In our religious tradition they are called *līlā*, the changing, and *nitya*, the changeless. In religious language they are

also called *Śakti* and *Śiva*. The world is a manifestation of *Śakti*, primordial, divine energy. And *Śiva* is that same energy in its quiescent state. *Śakti* is the active, dynamic state and *Śiva* is the quiescent state; both together constitute the highest reality which man has to experience here itself. God, so presented, is both personal and impersonal. He is the personal God of the devotee, Christian, Muslim, Hindu. He is also the impersonal of certain aspects of Vedanta, and of several other systems as well. Thus, here is a reality of which the whole universe is a manifestation. This search for religion, therefore, is a search for a reality which is abiding, which is immortal, ever-pure, ever-perfect.

Realization is Everyone's Birthright

The sages also said, 'Man has not only that reality hidden within him, but he has the organic capacity to realize this truth—not just to believe in it.' All the teachers have spoken in the same language: 'I believe because I have experienced it. You can also experience it. It is the truth in you, it is the truth in all, the truth in Nature outside as well.' It is after this realization of the infinite pure consciousness hidden behind the mind that they discovered the world outside as an expression of that divine consciousness. What you rejected in the beginning, you take back once again. You rejected it because you viewed it in a segmented way. But now you see it once again, in a new light, as the divine itself. That is why the first verse in the *Īśāvāsyopaniṣad* proclaims: *Īśāvāsyam-idam sarvaṁ yatkiñca jagatyāṁ jagat*, the whole universe is filled with God or Brahman only. As pure consciousness It is the substratum of everything in the universe. Everything is only a pulsation of that infinite pure consciousness which is called the Atman or Brahman. Whatever terms you may use, don't be carried away with the word, says Shankaracharya; words are nothing. Here is the truth, and you are trying to put a name

to it. But it is beyond all name and all form. That is the language Vedanta uses to convey in some way that profound experience of the One behind the many. The One does not change; the many change all the time.

In purely physical terms, modern nuclear physics uses the same language. Here is the quantum field energy, and here are the particles and molecular structures. One is the truth, and the other is an *expression* of this truth. That is the language we use today. Einstein might say, the field alone is true, the particles are only a temporary manifestation of the field. In the Vedantic language we tell every one that *mantra*: You are That, *tat-tvam-asi*.

That message of *tat-tvam-asi* is the great message that modern humanity needs for stabilizing itself in this most unstable world of ours. Today the physical sciences have made our life thoroughly unstable, thoroughly unfulfilled. We are shaken here and there, absolutely, like any other object in Nature. Man has to be restored to his freedom, to his dignity, to his true nature. That is what the Upanishads do through the science of religion. Physical sciences, as I said in the beginning, can destroy some fear. The other fears are more harmful, fears coming from within man himself. Vedanta brings us light from which that second fearlessness will come, which is complete fearlessness. That is why in the Upanishads knowledge of God is attainment of fearlessness. Nowhere in the literature of any other religion will you find this assertion: By knowing God you become utterly fearless: *abhayaṁ vai prāptosi, Janaka*. The teacher is telling a student who is an emperor: Emperor Janaka, you have realized this truth, this Brahman; you have achieved fearlessness. How many ailments today arise from mere fear. Tensions and unfulfilment come from countless fears. Externally there is no fear; internally everything is fraught with fear. Why? Because absolute ignorance prevails in the inner realm. We know so much of the world,

we know very little about ourselves.

Columbus started his exploration some centuries ago. Today in this twentieth century, towards the last decade of the century, comes this new message: Continue that exploration, but in the most difficult field, your own hinterland of consciousness. Some profound truth is waiting for you there. The science of religion is the pre-eminent science for man today. Why? Because it continues and perfects that tremendous search we started three or four centuries ago in the physical world—the search for truth. This idea of the pre-eminence of religion in the twentieth century has been expressed by a few scientists, one of whom I would like refer to: Millikan, the astro-physicist. He says towards the end of his autobiography, 'There are two pillars of human well-being, namely: knowledge, that is, science, and the other is religion. Each of these cannot obtain its maximum effectiveness without support from the other. Religion without science will not function well; science without religion will not function well.... But having said it, so far as science is concerned, we have universities and research institutions to further it. But the supreme opportunity for everyone today, without any exception, lies in the world of religion.' This we can accept fully if we approach religion as a sane scientific investigation in that most neglected area of experience, the inner side of man, which is pulsating all the time. We neglected it in the past. Today we cannot neglect it.

From the practical point of view, all the ailments of man, all the distortions of his psyche, all distortions of his social situation, proceed from this utter ignorance of the inner nature of man. That is why we need most this practical knowledge today. Theoretically also it is absolutely important to know the nature of the observer: in nuclear physics we see that the observer ceases to be a mere passive observer, he becomes a participator. That consciousness of man plays a part in that observation and is a datum which needs

investigation. Science cannot take anything for granted. If this study continues vigorously but scientifically, we shall achieve what the Upanishads achieved ages ago: the knowledge of our own infinite nature. That *tat-tvam-asi* will be realized by people, so that this moving on the surface of life will change and depth will come in the human spirit, human character, human personality. There is a good deal of flimsiness in the human mind and character today. That will change and something deep will come when this profound truth is discovered. Sri Ramakrishna in one of his parables said: 'If you swim on the surface of the sea, you get cheap shells, but if you dive deep you get pearls.' Similarly, profound truth lies deep in our experience. By surface-swimming you won't get it; from the sensory level you will never get it. You have to go deeper.

It is this 'deepening' that makes the science of religion the pre-eminent science for all humanity. That is the verdict of Vedanta, of the Upanishads: that the *adhyātma vidyā*, the science of man in depth, is the pre-eminent science. It is a profound science, because I may have every other science and yet my life may be very trivial. But if I have this science, even though the other sciences are much less understood, still, I will be much more fulfilled, much more capable of communicating with people than otherwise. We go to Buddha not to get a dogma preached to us, but to get some spiritual strength within us. We go to Ramakrishna in the modern times not for any dogma or a creed, but just to get that spiritual stimulus. Today the whole humanity needs that spiritual stimulus so that the great wealth of physical science can be matched by a comparable spiritual wealth within man himself. That is a beautiful combination, a desirable combination. And the modern age is just ready, just fitted, for this tremendous advance into the deeper levels of existence—to the heart of reality. □

Mind According to the East and the West

DR. RAMAKRISHNARAO VETURY

(Continued from the February issue)

Mind in the Upaniṣads

As early as in the *R̥g-Veda*, we find mind connected with desires. The 'Hymn of Creation' says: 'Within It first arose desire, the primal germ of mind....'¹⁸ Mind is recognized as the seat of desires. With this beginning in the Vedas, this is emphasized throughout the Upaniṣads. We find a more detailed and thorough understanding of mind in the Upaniṣads: 'Desire, imagination, doubt, faith, lack of faith, steadfastness, lack of steadfastness, shame, meditation, fear—all this is truly mind.'¹⁹ Descartes had defined the thing that thinks as the one that 'doubts, understands, conceives, affirms, denies, wills, imagines and feels—for feeling occurs in dreams, is a form of thinking. Since thought is the essence of mind, the mind must always think even during sleep.'²⁰ Both lists agree closely as to what goes under mental functioning. The *Aitareya Upaniṣad* gives a more comprehensive list of mental faculties: 'That which is heart and mind—that is consciousness, perception, discrimination, intelligence, impulse, memory, conception, purpose, life, desire, will...'²¹ This exhaustive list of mental fac-

ulties illustrates easily Dr. McDougall's definition: 'We may fairly define mind as an organized system of mental or purposive forces...'²² The above are purely mental functions or faculties and do not have a corresponding physical sense organ.

Mind and the Senses

In addition to the above, the Upaniṣads record a vitally important but extremely simple observation in their analysis of mind. 'My mind is elsewhere, I did not see. My mind is elsewhere, I did not hear. It is with the mind, that one sees. It is with the mind one hears.... Therefore, even if one is touched on his back, he discerns with the mind.'²³ The simplicity lies in the fact that everyone has this experience sometime or other in his lifetime, even if we count out the proverbial absent-minded professor. A man with a preoccupied mind misses much. The universality of this simple experience makes it highly dependable for any conclusions drawn from it. That is its importance. The conclusion is given in the last sentence. It means that all sense perception is also only with the mind. The sense organs are only the necessary instruments to collect the sense data. No doubt, you need the eyes to see but the eye alone is not the 'seer'; the mind must work with the eye to be able to 'see'. A microscope is necessary to see the bacteria, but the microscope is only a tool to help the man who, indeed, is the real observer. Simi-

18. M. Hiriyanna, *Outlines of Indian Philosophy* (Bombay: Blackie and Sons Publishers Ltd., 1983), p. 42.

19. *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, Translation by Hume, śloka, 1.5.3. [Hereafter, *Bṛ. Up.*].

20. B. Russell, *History of Western Philosophy* (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1974), p. 548. [Hereafter, *Western Philosophy*]; also see ref. 12.

21. *Aitareya Upaniṣad*, Translation by Hume, śloka, 5.2.

22. S. Radhakrishnan, *Indian Philosophy*, vol. 1 (Bombay: Blackie and Sons Publishers Ltd., 1983), p. 399.

23. *Bṛ. Up.*, 1.5.3.

larly, all sense perception is by the mind with the help of the sense organs.

The above is an important conclusion. Mind carries out not only the mental functions but it also effectively participates in the functions of the body. The body is helpless without the mind to carry out its functions of perception. The Upaniṣads present the above points very clearly and distinctly. There is absolutely no way for anyone to dispute the above observations on absent-minded persons. Descartes does not seem to have considered this obvious fact.

Now let us apply Descartes' criterion for truth to this case: 'All things that we conceive very clearly and distinctly are true.'²⁴ By this criterion, the Upaniṣadic observation establishes as indisputable the truth that the mind and the body work together in perception. One without the other is useless. And this conclusion is as true as the '*Cogito ergo sum*' of Descartes.

Mind and Motor Activity

We have so far seen that mind performs two types of activities: (1) the purely mental activities, and (2) sense perceptions with the aid of the sense organs. It remains to be seen whether the mind has anything to do with the motor organs of the body. This is also important because Descartes considered the body as a machine. This aspect also has been clarified by the Upaniṣads and it has been established that the mind controls the body.

It is stated that Brahman becomes known through its identification with the intellect, the mind, the vital breath, etc.²⁵ Identified with desires, the soul generates the resolve in the mind to activate the bodily motor organs to perform the necessary

activity (*karma*) for the fulfilment of the desires.²⁶ This formulation has been necessary in the Upaniṣads to establish the connection between the transmigration of the non-corporeal soul under the controlling influence of the *karma* performed with the help of the corporeal body. 'But people say, "A person is made (not of acts but) of desires only" (In reply to this I say:) "As is his desire, such is his resolve; as is his resolve, such is the action he performs;..."'²⁷ That is why 'one becomes good by good actions, bad by bad actions'.²⁸ Therefore, according to the Upaniṣads, mind as the seat of desires, guides the actions of the body. The ultimate responsibility of all bodily action is that of the mind and the soul identified with desire. Man is responsible for his actions. The body is not simply a machine or automaton obeying some extraneous and impersonal laws of physics. The *karma* doctrine of the Upaniṣads, in fact, carried this responsibility to its logical extreme. Schrödinger's worry that the extreme dualism of mind and body removes all responsibility from the man who performs actions, does not arise in the Upaniṣadic approach. 'As he desires, so he wills; as he wills, so he works; as the work is done so it happens.'²⁹ The doctrine of will and the doctrine of *karma* make man fully accountable for his actions without any scope for escape.

Mind and Soul

Tracing the flow of perception from the senses to the mind and further on, the Upaniṣads show that ultimately the perceiving subject is the soul. When Yājñavalkya stated, 'You can not see the seer of (the act of) seeing. You can not hear the hearer of (the

26. Ibid., 4.4.5.

27. Ibid., 4.4.5.

28. Ibid., 4.4.5.

29. S.N. Dasgupta, *A History of Indian Philosophy*, vol. 1 (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1975), p. 55.

24. *Western Philosophy*, p. 548; see also ref. 8.

25. *Bṛ. Up.*, 4.4.5.

act of) hearing. You can not think (about) the thinker (behind the act) of thinking. You can not understand the understander of understanding. He is your soul, which is in all things,³⁰ he was establishing a close connection between the body, the mind and the soul. Mind is the intermediate link between the body and the soul. 'Verily, the soul is Brahman, as also identified with the intellect, the mind, the vital breath, the eyes and the ears, the earth, water, air and the space,...'³¹

C.G. Jung, a psychologist, reiterates the view of the Upaniṣads: 'All science (wissenschaft) however is a function of the soul, in which all knowledge is rooted.'³² At the same time, all mental and bodily activities of perception end up in the soul, via the mind, according to the Upaniṣads. The word 'vital breath' indicates the life in the body. The total complex of the human being (*jīva*) is the soul-mind-life-body unit. This complex is dissolved on the death of a person, according to Yājñavalkya: 'After death there is no consciousness.'³³ In the above complex we can leave out soul for the present and conclude that the mind and body are closely connected in every living being. Sherrington's complaint that physics and physiology leave us in the lurch at one stage in understanding the process of seeing, is met in the Upaniṣads by involving the mind in the process of seeing. The lens in the eyes follow the laws of physics; the retina follows the laws of physiology; and the mind completes the process of 'seeing'. So, mind is an active, responsible and controlling partner of the body according to the Upaniṣads as much as the hand is a part of the body.

30. *Br. Up.*, 3.4.2 and 3.7.23.

31. *Br. Up.*, 4.4.5.

32. G.G. Jung, quoted in Erwin Schrödinger, *Mind and Matter* (Cambridge: University Press, 1958), p. 40.

33. *Br. Up.*, 2.4.12.

Mind as an Organ and as a Faculty

The Upaniṣads treated the mind as an item in their analysis of human faculties. They considered various faculties in men and identified a functioning organ in the body for each of the faculties: 'Prajapati created active functions (*karma*)... "I am going to see," said the eye. "I am going to hear," said the ear. So spake the other functions, each according to its function.'³⁴ Later the Upaniṣads included thinking by the mind. So, they treated mind as an *organ* similar to the eye and the ear though it has no form or structure like the eye or the ear.

The doctrine of *prāṇa* (vital breath) includes the mind as one of the human faculties along with the eye, the ear, etc.³⁵ Knowing and thinking are shown to be two mental faculties. We find 'mind' in the list of *grahas* and *atigrahas* (the organs and the faculties).³⁶ In this list the faculty of desire is shown against the mind. Thus at various stages the Upaniṣads treated mind on a par with any sense organ. Mind is an internal organ with a name but no form unlike the other organs of the body which have both name and form.

Pañcakośa

The Upaniṣadic *pañcakośa* also treats mind as one stage in the evolutionary process. Thus we have *aṇu-maya-kośa* (matter sheath), *prāṇa-maya-kośa* (life sheath), *mano-maya-kośa* (mind sheath), *vijñāna-maya-kośa* (intelligence sheath) and *ānanda-maya-kośa* (bliss sheath).³⁷ This is quite like the system of body-life-mind-soul mentioned earlier. Obviously, the Upaniṣadic approach to the human organism is similar to the systems approach of recent times, which uses a holistic approach instead of a study in

34. *Br. Up.*, 1.5.2.

35. *Br. Up.*, 6.1.11, *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, 5.1.11, and *Kauṣītaki Upaniṣad*, 2.11.

36. *Br. Up.*, 3.2.1–9.

37. *Taittirīya Upaniṣad*, 2.2–5 and 3.1–6.

isolation.

Nāma, Rūpa and Karma

The Upaniṣads analyse the mind from another angle. The world is the object of perception and is amenable to perception because of its differentiated appearance. Before creation the world was undifferentiated. 'Verily, at that time the world was undifferentiated. It became differentiated by name and form....'³⁸ This is again an argument based on simple facts and universal experience. None can doubt or dispute the fact that we identify a person by his name and his appearance. As the Upaniṣads say, 'it is true even today, that we distinguish a person by saying, "He has such and such a name, such and such a form."'³⁹ In our contemporary world we emphasize this with a legal framework. The man is to be identified by his name, his father's name, the name of his village, etc. His appearance is recorded by specifying the identification marks on his body. Both these procedures are intended to distinguish one from another. And this method of identification is universally true—even for identifying biological species, elements, compounds, etc.

The form (*rūpa*) appeals to the eye and the eye apprehends forms.⁴⁰ The name (*nāma*) is uttered in speech,⁴¹ heard with the ear, and recollected by the mind. Action is performed with the motor organs of the body, typically the hands.⁴² The triad—name, form and action—constitute the world.⁴³ Behind this triad, mind functions as the base. Recording and recollection of names is purely by the mind. Seeing a form has been shown earlier to be by the mind

with the aid of the eye. Action by the motor organs also is preceded by the mental resolve to act. So the basis for all this differentiated world of *nāma*, *rūpa* and *karma* is the mind. Mind is not a clean slate, not a passive *tabula rasa*. It is a very dynamic agent of all perception and action, fully integrated with the body. It is a formless internal organ responsible for all perceptions. So there is no distinction between the body and the mind in their being aids to perception.

The Upaniṣadic position on mind may therefore be summarized as follows:

1. The Upaniṣads fully appreciate all purely mental activities.
2. They consider mind an internal organ.
3. On extremely simple considerations, they proved that the functions of the bodily organs require the cooperation of the mind. Therefore, they established that perception is made possible by the mind.
4. They showed that all bodily action is dictated by the mind.

From the above we conclude that according to the Upaniṣads the body and the mind are intimately connected; with the mind controlling the body. Therefore, man is fully responsible for his actions. The mind and body belong to the same world and, therefore, the mind-body problem does not exist in the Upaniṣads.

(to be continued)

38. *Br. Up.*, 1.4.7.

39. *Br. Up.*, 1.4.7.

40. *Br. Up.*, 3.2.5 and 1.6.2.

41. *Br. Up.*, 1.6.1.

42. *Br. Up.*, 3.2.8.

43. *Br. Up.*, 1.6.1.

O my dear, as darkness and light cannot remain together, so how can ignorance and knowledge be in Brahman? All this is that one, spotless, formless Reality.

—*Avadhuta Gita*, I. 43.

Centenary of the Ramakrishna Mission

SWAMI CHETANANANDA

In this lucid article, Swami Chetanananda, the Spiritual Leader of the Vedanta Society of St. Louis, tracing parallels with other established monastic organizations, makes salient observations regarding the advent of Sri Ramakrishna, his mission on earth, and the founding of the Ramakrishna Mission.

An Avatar Comes with a Mission

In the Vishnu Purana it is said: Some people only talk about religion. They do not perform their duties or truly practise religion. As a result, religion declines, and people become hypocrites; so God takes a human form in order to show us how to practise religion.

The Hindus believe in the truth of this verse: God comes in every age to fulfil the spiritual needs of that time. Rama, Krishna, Buddha, Jesus, Muhammad, Chaitanya, Ramakrishna, and other divine incarnations have come one after another. As the same moon rises again and again, so the same God comes to this earth again and again.

After completing his mission, when Buddha was on his deathbed, his main disciple Ananda asked a few questions:

Ananda: Master, when you depart, we shall collect your teachings. What words should we begin them with to show that they are Buddha's?

Buddha: Use four words: 'Thus I have heard.'

Ananda: Master, when you leave, where should we dwell?

Buddha: You should dwell in the four dwellings of mindfulness: contemplation of the body as impure; contemplation of feelings as suffering; contemplation of thoughts as impermanent; and contemplation of dharma as devoid of Self.

Ananda: Master, when you leave, who will teach us?

Buddha: The truth and the rules of the Order which I have set forth and laid down for you all, let them, after I am gone, be a teacher unto you.¹

Christ also empowered his disciples to conduct, to continue his ministry through love, compassion, friendship, and humility. He said: 'Preach as you go, saying, "The kingdom of heaven is at hand." Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse lepers, cast out demons. Freely you have received, freely you shall give.'² According to the Bible, after Christ's resurrection the Holy Ghost descended upon his disciples, and with that power they carried his message to the masses.

Ramakrishna lived from 1836 to 1886. Like other avatars, he had a mission, and like other avatars, he came with a group of disciples whom he empowered to carry on that mission. Ramakrishna knew that his disciples would have to carry his teachings all over the world. Once after coming down from samadhi, he told Sri Sarada Devi: 'Listen, my dear, I went to the land of white people. Ah, how sincere is their devotion!' In 1902 Swami Turiyananda, speaking to some devotees in California, stated: 'Once our Master told us that he had other disci-

1. *The Middle Way* (Journal of the Buddhist Society: London, November 1973), pp. 105-6; and Paul Carus, *The Gospel of Buddha* (The Publications Division, Govt. of India: New Delhi, 1961), p. 200.

2. Bible, *Matthew*, 10:7-8.

ples who spoke a different language, who had different customs, somewhere far away in the West. "They also will worship me," the Master had said, "they also are Mother's children." You are those disciples.³

Compassion - Vision - Mission

One day in 1884 at Dakshineswar Ramakrishna was seated in his room, talking to his disciples about a famous statement of the Vaishnava religion taught by Chaitanya. '*Jive daya name ruchi vaishnava sevan, Iha vina dharma nai shuna Sanatan* — Listen O Sanatan, these are the foremost of all spiritual disciplines: compassion for all living beings, love of God's name, and service to devotees.' Repeating the word *compassion*, Ramakrishna went into samadhi. After a while he returned to normal consciousness and said to the devotees: 'How foolish it is to speak of compassion! Man is an insignificant worm crawling on the earth — and he is to show compassion to others! This is absurd. It must not be compassion, but service to all. Recognize them as God's manifestations and serve them.'

Serve human beings as God. This was the very seed of the whole Ramakrishna Mission, planted in 1884 by Ramakrishna himself at Dakshineswar. But at the time, only Narendra (later, Swami Vivekananda) understood the implications of what the Master had said. That day, standing on the veranda outside Ramakrishna's room, he said to his brother disciples: 'What a wonderful light I have discovered in those words of the Master! How beautifully he has reconciled the ideal of bhakti with the knowledge of Vedanta, generally interpreted as dry, austere, and incompatible with human sentiments! What a grand, natural, and sweet synthesis!... Those following the paths of karma [action] and yoga [contemplation] are similarly benefited by these words of the

Master. The embodied being cannot remain even for a minute without activity. All his activities should be directed to the service of man, the manifestation of God upon earth, and this will accelerate his progress towards the goal. If it be the will of God, I shall one day proclaim this noble truth before the world at large. I shall make it the common property of all — the wise and the foolish, the rich and the poor, the brahmin and the pariah.⁴

Ramakrishna died in 1886, and his disciples, led by Swami Vivekananda, established a monastery in Baranagore. Here they spent their time practising hard austerities and remembering their blessed days with the Master.

In 1890 Vivekananda left the monastery to begin a period of wandering all over India. It would be seven years before he would return. In 1893 some devotees in South India asked him to go to the West and represent Hinduism at the Parliament of Religions to be held in Chicago. Vivekananda also had a vision that his master was asking him to go to the West, and when Sarada Devi confirmed that she too had had a similar vision, Vivekananda went. He was the first Vedanta monk to go to America, carrying the message of Ramakrishna.

To Organize or Not to Organize

After reaching the United States, Vivekananda observed the enormous power of organization that lay behind American life. Once he told his host, Emily Lyon of Chicago: 'You know, I have had one of the greatest temptations of my life here.' 'Why, who is she, Swami?' Mrs. Lyon asked. 'Oh, Mrs. Lyon,' he laughed, 'it isn't a lady. It's organization.'⁵

But Vedanta, the source of Hinduism,

3. Swami Atulananda, *With the Swamis in America* (Advaita Ashrama: Calcutta, 1946), p. 103.

4. Swami Chetanananda, *God Lived with Them* (Vedanta Society: St. Louis, 1997), p. 35.

5. His Eastern and Western Admirers, *Reminiscences of Swami Vivekananda* (Advaita Ashrama: Calcutta, 1983), p. 133.

has never been an organized religion; it has always been the religion of free souls and mendicants. However, Vivekananda understood that an individual may be powerful, but it is not possible for one person to do everything on a large scale: A following is necessary in order to carry great ideas to posterity. He had the mission of his master to fulfil; he could not do it alone.

On the other hand, Vivekananda also understood the possible dangers of organization: politics, power struggles, corruption, and commercialism.

At Thousand Island Park, during the summer of 1895, he debated: 'To organize or not to organize. If I organize, the spirit will diminish. If I do not organize, the message will not spread.'⁶ In the end, he was determined that his master's great message should not be lost to humankind. Vivekananda knew that the only thing that would keep corruption out of organized work was purity of life. Two days after leaving Thousand Island Park, he wrote to a disciple:

Neither numbers, nor powers, nor wealth, nor learning, nor eloquence, nor anything else will prevail, but purity, living the life, in one word, *anubhuti*, realization. Let there be a dozen such lion-souls in each country, lions who have broken their own bonds, who have touched the Infinite, whose whole souls are gone to Brahman, who care neither for wealth, nor power, nor fame, and these will be *enough* to shake the world.⁷

And so he organized. In November 1894 he founded the Vedanta Society of New York, which consisted simply of a committee whose task was to publish his lectures. In October of 1895 he called for two of his brother disciples Saradananda and Abhedananda to come to the West and carry on the Vedanta work in London and New York.

After two years, Swami Saradananda was called back to India, but Swami Abhedananda remained in America for twenty-five years, fourteen of them as head of the Vedanta Society of New York. When Vivekananda sailed to the West for the second time, in 1899, he took with him Swami Turiyananda. In April of 1900, Vivekananda founded a Vedanta Society in San Francisco, then he asked Swami Turiyananda to take over that work and also to establish a retreat in Northern California. Turiyananda was in America for three years. He was followed by Swami Trigunatita, who spent the last twelve years of his life as head of the Vedanta Society in San Francisco.

The *Bhagavad Gita* tells us: 'Whatever a great man does, that others follow; whatever he sets up as a standard, that the world follows.'⁸ These five disciples of Ramakrishna set high standards, that were upheld by generation after generation of Vedanta monks that have followed them. Through lectures, scriptural classes, and private instructions in spiritual practice, monks of the Ramakrishna Order in the West have always emphasized the divinity of the soul, the unity of existence, the universality of Truth, and the harmony of religions.

Birth of the Ramakrishna Mission

In 1897 Vivekananda returned to India. Upon receiving tremendous receptions everywhere, he said: 'Friends, I am very pleased with your enthusiasm. It is marvellous. Only make it permanent; keep it up. Let not the fire die out.'⁹ He at last reached Calcutta, where he saw many of his brother monks, some of them for the first time since he left the monastery in 1890. After a few weeks, he went to Darjeeling for much-needed rest. Again, in Darjeeling, he considered how best to carry on the work. Still burning in his mind were the words of his master, 'Serve

6. *Prabuddha Bharata*, 1978, p. 125.

7. *Letters of Swami Vivekananda* (Advaita Ashrama: 1981), p. 247.

8. *Bhagavad Gita*, 3:21.

9. *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda* (Advaita Ashrama, 1970), vol. 3, p. 205.

human beings as God.'

Towards the end of April 1897, Vivekananda returned to Calcutta to give concrete shape to Ramakrishna's teaching on practical Vedanta. The Ramakrishna Mission was officially born on Saturday, 1 May 1897. Swamiji called for devotees to gather at 3 p.m. at Balaram Basu's house in Calcutta. Forty people, both devotees and monastics, came, and he said to them: 'From my travels in various countries, I have come to the conclusion that without organization nothing great and permanent can be done.... This organization will bear the name of him in whose name we have become sannyasins; him, taking whom as your ideal you are leading the householder life in the field of activity — this Samsara [this world]; him whose holy name, and the influence of whose unique life and teachings, have within twelve years of his demise spread in such an unthought-of way both in the East and the West. Let this Sangha [organization] therefore be named the Ramakrishna Mission. We are but the servants of the Master. May you all help in this work!'¹⁰

Swamiji's proposal was accepted with enthusiasm by all monks and householder devotees present.

Again on 5 May Vivekananda met with some devotees and brother monastics. At this time he declared: 'This Association [Sangha] shall be known as the Ramakrishna Mission. The aim of the Sangha is to preach those truths which Sri Ramakrishna has, for the good of humanity, preached and demonstrated by practical application in his own life, and to help others to put these truths into practice in their lives for their temporal, mental, and spiritual advancement.'¹¹

Vivekananda then talked about the

methods of work, training men, introducing arts and industries, and humanitarian work.

Vivekananda became general president of the Mission, and he made Swami Brahmananda and Swami Yogananda president and vice-president respectively of the Calcutta centre; Narendranath Mitra was appointed secretary; Dr. Shashibhushan Ghose and Sharatchandra Sarkar, undersecretaries; and Sharatchandra Chakrabarty, reader of scriptures.

Meetings were to be held every Sunday afternoon, and were to include readings and recitations from Vedanta scriptures as well as talks, expositions, and the reading of original papers.

Vivekananda wanted to establish an ideal society. He wanted to bring the best from the West and share it with India, and in turn to share India's spiritual treasures with the West. For this reason, he wanted Vedanta centres to be established in countries all over the world. This, he felt, would bring about a closer relationship between East and West.

Still, Vivekananda's ideas were not entirely accepted by all, and his main opposition came from some of his own brother disciples. After the first meeting, on 1 May 1897, when the devotees had left, Swami Yogananda openly questioned Vivekananda's methods of work. The following conversation took place:

Yogananda: You are doing these things by Western methods. Would you say that Sri Ramakrishna left us any such instructions?

Vivekananda: How do you know that these methods are not in keeping with his ideas? Sri Ramakrishna was the embodiment of infinite ideas: Do you want to shut him up in your own limits? I shall break those limits and scatter his ideas broadcast all over the world. He never instructed me to introduce worship of him, and so forth. The methods of spiritual practice, concentration and

10. His Eastern and Western Disciples, *Life of Swami Vivekananda* (Advaita Ashrama: 1981), vol. 2, p. 247.

11. Ibid., vol. 2, p. 247.

meditation, and the other higher ideals of religion that he taught — those we must realize and teach to all men. Infinite are the ideas and infinite are the paths that lead to the goal. I was not born to create a new sect in this world, too full of sects already. Blessed are we that we have found refuge at the feet of our Master. It is our duty to give the ideas entrusted to us freely to the whole world.

Time and again I have received in this life marks of his grace. He himself is at my back and is making me do all these things in these ways. When I used to lie under a tree, exhausted, smitten with hunger; when I had not a strip of cloth even to tie my *kaupina* with; when I had resolved to travel round the world penniless; even then, through his grace, I received help in every way. Then again, when people in crowds jostled with one another in the streets of Chicago to have sight of this Vivekananda, I was able, through his blessings, to digest without difficulty all that honour, a hundredth part of which would have turned the head of any other man. By the will of the Lord, victory has been mine everywhere. Now I intend to do something for this country. Do you all give up doubts and misgivings and help me in my work; and you will see how, by his grace, wonders will be accomplished.

Yogananda: Whatever you will, shall come about. We are always ready to follow your leading. I clearly see that the Master is working through you. Still, I confess, doubts do sometimes arise in the mind, for, as we saw it, his method of doing things was so different; and so I am led to ask myself whether we are not straying from Sri Ramakrishna's teachings.

Vivekananda: The thing is this: Sri Ramakrishna is far greater than his disciples understand him to be. He is the embodiment of infinite spiritual ideas capa-

ble of development in infinite ways. Even if one can find a limit to the knowledge of Brahman, one cannot measure the unfathomable depths of our Master's mind! One gracious glance of his eyes can create a hundred thousand Vivekanandas at this instant! But if this time he chooses, instead, to work through me, making me his instrument, I can only bow to his will.¹²

Then Latu Maharaj (Swami Adbhutananda), a simple, unlettered mystic and a knower of God, objected to Vivekananda's methods. He asked: 'Brother, why have you started all these activities? Won't these interfere with our meditation and prayer?'

Vivekananda at first joked light-heartedly with Latu Maharaj, saying: 'How can you understand why I am introducing all these works. You are a dumbbell! At the sound of *ka*, you shed tears like Prahlada [a devotee of Krishna, who was reminded of Krishna by the first letter of Krishna's name]. You are all devotees. What can you understand of this? You can only whine like babies. You think you can achieve liberation by crying, and that on the last day the Master will take you to heaven, and there you will enjoy life to your heart's content. And those who are studying the scriptures for knowledge, who are working to educate people in the path of righteousness, and serving the diseased and distressed will all go to hell because all these works are maya. What a grand idea! — that to do good to mankind is an unnecessary bother, and one cannot attain God through these activities. This is your view, isn't it? As if God-realization were very easy — you can call on God and here He comes. Does God appear before a man who merely puts His picture on an altar and throws a few flowers before Him? Tell me that.'

Swami Adbhutananda was astonished. Then suddenly Vivekananda became grave

12. Ibid., vol. 2, pp. 249–50.

and thundered: 'Ah, what you call devotion is sentimental nonsense that only weakens a man. Who cares for that kind of devotion? I have no faith in that devotion which makes a person so selfish, so busy with his personal liberation, that his heart does not feel for others.... You know, one day I foolishly asked the Master for this kind of devotion and liberation, and he rebuked me and called me selfish and small-minded. Should I be misled by your words? I'll work as he has told me.... I will go to hell cheerfully a thousand times, if I can rouse my countrymen, immersed in *tamas* [inertia], and make them stand on their own feet and be men, inspired with the spirit of *karma yoga*.'¹³

The swami's voice became choked, tears streamed from his eyes, and he left the room. Later, when his brother disciples tried to console him, he told them: 'When one attains *bhakti*, one's heart and nerves become so soft and delicate that they cannot bear even the touch of a flower!... I cannot think or talk of Sri Ramakrishna long, without being overwhelmed. So I am trying and trying always to keep down the rush of *bhakti* welling within me. I am trying to bind and bind myself with the iron chain of *jnana*, for still my work to my motherland is unfinished, and my message to the world not yet fully delivered.... Oh, I have work to do! I am a slave of Ramakrishna, who left his work to be done by me, and will not give me rest till I have finished it!'¹⁴

The next day, Swami Adbhutananda went to Vivekananda and said: 'Brother, what do I know? I am a fool. Please do not take my words to heart.' After this dramatic incident, there were no more objections.

13. Swami Chetanananda, *Swami Adbhutananda: Teachings and Reminiscences* (Vedanta Society: St. Louis, 1980), pp. 79–80; Swami Nikhilananda, *Vivekananda: The Yogas and Other Works* (Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Centre: New York, 1953), p. 128.

14. *Life of Vivekananda*, vol. 2, p. 253.

Vivekananda's brother disciples saw clearly that the Master was indeed working through his beloved Narendranath and that they must all sacrifice themselves for the good of the mission, for the welfare of all.

From the Minutes of the Ramakrishna Mission

The minutes of early meetings of the Ramakrishna Mission are a great treasure. One of the disciples of Ramakrishna would preside; another disciple or a devotee would speak; and there would be readings, and questions and answers. Sometimes M. (Mahendranath Gupta) would read portions of his diary, from which he was developing *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*. Then there would be a closing song.

These meetings gave the disciples and devotees of Ramakrishna a chance to recall their happy experiences with the Master and to express their own understandings of his life and mission. Here are some extracts from minutes of their meetings.

Third Meeting: 9 May 1897

Swami Brahmananda presided. About thirty members as well as some visitors were present. Swami Trigunatita read and explained a few verses from the *Gita*, bearing on the benefit of work as taught by Sri Krishna and exemplified by the teachings of Sri Ramakrishna.

Girish Chandra Ghosh then related his experiences with Sri Ramakrishna from the beginning of their association.... One night, Girish said, he was visiting a house of ill-fame with two friends when he suddenly felt an overpowering inclination to go to Dakshineswar. He then urged his companions to leave and hailed a carriage. Although the carriage was moving at a brisk pace, Girish told the driver to go even faster.

The night had far advanced and most people were asleep when the three of them staggered into Ramakrishna's room. To Girish's surprise, he received an extraordinary welcome. Grabbing him suddenly with his hands, Ramakrishna began to dance and

sing with joy. A thought flashed through Girish's mind that indeed he was in the presence of an extraordinary man; for who else would give such a welcome to a fallen man like himself? His own father or mother would have shunned him in this condition. Yet here was one, honoured by hundreds as a saint, who thought it worthwhile to love and welcome him thus. If ever there were a purifier of errant souls, Girish thought, this is he.¹⁵

Fourth Meeting: 16 May 1897

Swami Brahmananda presided. More than fifty members were present. Sharat Chandra Chakrabarty read and commented on some verses of the Katha Upanishad, remarking that Sri Ramakrishna used to say, 'Tucking the nondual knowledge in your pocket, do whatever you like.' By this he had meant that the first requisite of life, either social or religious, is the knowledge of Brahman and that one should gain that knowledge before anything else.

Manomohan Mittra described his own meeting and experiences with Sri Ramakrishna.... On one occasion he had been very anxious to go to Dakshineswar, but the sky was cloudy, the night advancing and the river was very rough. In spite of everything, he engaged a boat and came to Dakshineswar. As he entered Ramakrishna's room, the latter burst into tears and said, 'You risked your life to see me.'

Once Manomohan passed the night at Dakshineswar. It was quite late when Ramakrishna said to him, 'What do you want?' 'I want to live with you. I don't want to go home.' 'That is not right,' Ramakrishna answered. 'If you kill the mother fish, the little ones will all die. If you go away, who will look after your family?'¹⁶

Seventh Meeting: 6 June 1897

Swami Brahmananda presided. About sixty-five members were present. Swami

Turiyananda read a hymn in praise of Sri Ramakrishna. He then explained a few verses from the Kena Upanishad.

Girish Chandra Ghosh spoke about the work of Swami Vivekananda, emphasizing that Swamiji was spreading the teachings of Ramakrishna without the least thought of making himself the originator of the ideas he was disseminating.

He continued as follows: 'Vivekananda's deep love for the disciples of the Master reveals how deeply he loves and adores Sri Ramakrishna. This boundless love expressed itself one day, just before he was starting for Darjeeling, when he told me, "I can lay down my life, even this very moment, in the service of the Master." Through words and deeds he is striving to spread the teachings of the Master so that the entire world may benefit from the spiritual message of Sri Ramakrishna. I call that person ignorant who thinks Swami Vivekananda is separate or different from Sri Ramakrishna.'¹⁷

Twenty-fifth Meeting: 24 October 1897

Swami Brahmananda presided. Brahmachari Prakashananda [later, Swami Prakashananda, who became head of the San Francisco centre in 1915] commented on the Katha Upanishad. A question and answer session followed. [The respondent is most likely Girish Chandra Ghosh.]

Q: What was the need for Sri Ramakrishna's advent as an avatar?

A: Before Sri Ramakrishna came, religious ideals and practices were in a state of turmoil. For instance, if someone hides a key in a remote corner of a market place, how easily do you think it can be found? Similarly, prior to the advent of Ramakrishna it had become impossible to find the key to the realization of God in the welter of scriptures, sects, and creeds. Sri Ramakrishna's incarnation was needed to bring order and harmony

15. *Vedanta and the West*, Hollywood, 185:11-14.

16. *Ibid.*, 185:15-17.

17. *Ibid.*, 186:49-50.

to the various religions. It was he who said, 'Every form of true faith in God is a true path to the one and only goal. All religions are true if they lead to God, and if one is sincere and earnest at heart, one can attain Him by following any religion.'¹⁸

Thirty-fourth Meeting: 26 December 1897

Swami Brahmananda presided. Sharat Chandra Chakrabarty gave a talk on the eleventh book of the Bhagavatam.

Q: What were Sri Ramakrishna's instructions regarding meditation?

Swami Brahmananda: Sri Ramakrishna asked everyone to meditate. If a regular habit of meditation is not formed and maintained, it is possible for one to fall from a higher spiritual state to a lower one. Once Sri Ramakrishna asked Tota Puri [his guru] why an illumined soul like him should still continue to meditate. Pointing to his shiny water pot, Tota Puri answered that his water pot would not remain clean and bright if it were not washed and polished regularly.¹⁹

Living Gods Everywhere

The *Bhagavad Gita* describes the Cosmic God: 'With His hands and feet everywhere, with eyes, heads, and faces on all sides, with ears on all sides, He dwells in the world, enveloping all.'²⁰ Vivekananda experienced this and described it in a letter, 'May I be born again and again, and suffer thousands of miseries, so that I may worship the only God that exists, the only God I believe in, the sum total of all souls. And above all, my God the wicked, my God the miserable, my God the poor of all races, of all species, is the special object of my worship.'²¹

Gradually, the ideal of service to humanity to alleviate some of the pain and

suffering in the world, worked on the minds of Vivekananda's brother disciples. Whenever there was any natural calamity, Ramakrishna monks and devotees would go there. Soon, Swami Akhandananda began relief work in Murshidabad. On 15 June 1897, Vivekananda wrote to him:

I am getting detailed reports of you and getting more and more delighted. It is that sort of work which can conquer the world.... Bravo! Accept a hundred thousand embraces and blessings from me. Work, work, work — I care for nothing else. Work, work, work, even unto death! Those that are weak must make themselves great workers, great heroes — never mind money, it will drop from the heavens.... If in the attempt to carry morsels of food to starving mouths, name and possession and all be doomed even, thrice blessed art thou! It is the heart, the heart, that conquers, not the brain.²²

Margaret Noble (Sister Nivedita) came to India in January 1898; and a few months later she and Swami Sadananda led an extensive plague relief drive in Calcutta, cleaning streets themselves, teaching people how to boil water and to clean their living quarters. Nivedita also founded a school for girls, regarded today as one of the finest schools for girls in Calcutta.

Vivekananda founded three magazines, in order to spread the message of Sri Ramakrishna and Vedanta. Alasinga Perumal started publication of the *Brahmavadin* journal (now defunct) in Madras; Swami Swarupananda and Captain James Sevier and Mrs. Sevier continued* the *Prabuddha Bharata* journal from Mayavati; and Swami Trigunatita began publishing the Bengali journal *Udbodhan* in Calcutta.

And this was only the beginning. The work of the Ramakrishna Mission spread like wildfire and rapidly encircled the globe.

18. Ibid., 187:60.

19. Ibid., 187:63.

20. *Bhagavad Gita*, 13:13.

21. *Letters of Vivekananda*, p. 350.

22. Ibid., p. 342.

* Started in Madras in 1896 under the auspices of Swamiji.

By 1912, sixteen centres had been established. Today the official report of the Order lists 138 centres and hundreds of unaffiliated organizations dedicated to the ideals of Ramakrishna. The Mission focuses on spiritual, cultural, and educational activities; and it also works in the fields of relief and rehabilitation, medical and healthcare, publishing and preaching, and rural and tribal development.

The Taittiriya Upanishad states: 'Worship your mother as God, worship your father as God, worship your teacher as God, worship your guest as God.' Vivekananda was not a preacher of religion; he was a man of action. He gave a practical slant to this message of the Upanishad, and taught that one should worship the sick as God; worship the illiterate as God; worship the poor as God. In formal worship, particular deities require particular worship items: Mother Kali is worshipped with red flowers; Siva is worshipped with bel leaves; Vishnu is worshipped with tulsi leaves. In the Ramakrishna Mission, the sick are worshipped with medicine; the illiterate with education; the poor with food; and all are worshipped with spirituality.

A person becomes great through his or her sacrifice. Vivekananda told his monastic brothers and disciples: 'Remember, for the salvation of his soul and for the good and

happiness of many, a sannyasin is born in the world. To sacrifice his own life for others; to alleviate the misery of millions rending the air with their cries; to wipe away tears from the eyes of widows; to console the hearts of bereaved mothers; to provide the ignorant and depressed masses with ways and means in the struggle for existence, and make them stand on their own feet; to broadcast the teachings of the scriptures to one and all without distinction for their spiritual and material welfare; to rouse the sleeping lion of Brahman in the hearts of all beings by the knowledge of Vedanta, a sannyasin is born in the world.'²³

Vivekananda's rousing call inspired the minds of future generations and that is the key to the continuity of the Ramakrishna Mission. He said: 'Throw aside your meditation, throw away your salvation and such things! Put your whole heart and soul into the work to which I have consecrated myself.... I love you all ever so much, but I wish you would all die working for others.'²⁴ This was not a curse. It was a great blessing from the founding father of the Order to his followers. What he meant was: Let ego and selfishness die. You be immortal. □

23. *Vivekananda: Yogas and Other Works*, p. 124.

24. *Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, vol. 5, pp. 382-3.

Seek a proper time to retire into yourself, and often think of the benefits of God. Let curiosities alone. Read such matters as may move you to compunction rather than give you occupation. If you will withdraw yourself from superfluous talk and idle visits, as also from listening to news and to reports, you will find sufficient and proper time to employ yourself to good meditations. The greatest saints avoided the company of men as much as they could and chose to live up to God in secret.

—*The Imitation of Christ*, Thomas A Kempis, chapter 20

The Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Movement— Its Western Aspect

SUSAN WALTERS

In this thought-provoking article Susan Walters highlights the following contributions of the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Movement: (i) bringing to the West the eternal message of India, Vedanta, which teaches the divinity of man and the unity of all life; (ii) showing to the people of the West how to put into practice these fundamental truths thereby making life meaningful. The learned author concludes by saying that 'through the Movement inaugurated by him [Sri Ramakrishna], and directly too, he [Sri Ramakrishna] is helping people everywhere to proceed along the path to the supreme goal of life—Self-knowledge, God-realization'.

Much has been said and can be said about the growth of the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Movement. In India it is growing by leaps and bounds. The ancient principles of Vedanta which form the basis of that Movement are already in the soil of India and in the hearts and minds of the Indian people. The work of the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Movement here is only to bring these inherent principles to the surface and encourage their development. In line with these principles, it also seeks to alleviate the suffering of the poor and distressed, seeing the divinity in them.

The situation in the West is different. There the Movement is bringing a new way of thinking, a new culture, to a society which has become more and more detached from any meaningful philosophy of life or religion. In the words of Romain Rolland, 'The Western world, abandoning itself utterly to the search of individual and social happiness, maims and disfigures life by the very frenzy of its haste, and kills in the shell the very happiness it pursues.'¹ These words written over fifty years ago are as true today as they were then.

Rolland had great confidence in the saving power of Asia, specially India, which he deeply revered. He knew the West badly needed its help. He cried, 'Teach us to understand all things, Asia, teach us your knowledge of life.'²

But over fifty years before Rolland made this fervent plea for wisdom from the East, the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Movement had already been born and was beginning its slow but sure work of bringing the gift of Indian spirituality to the West. Swami Vivekananda, as is well known, started the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Movement in the West in 1893 by proclaiming the truths of Vedanta at the Parliament of Religions in Chicago.

How he broadcast this message all over America and brought his brother monks there to take charge of the Vedanta Societies he had founded, and how the Ramakrishna Order continues to send Indian swamis to be the spiritual leaders of the Societies that are now there, most of us are familiar with. But what is not so well known is the uniqueness of Vedanta and why it is so important to the West.

What exactly do we mean by *Vedanta*?

1. Romain Rolland in Foreword to *The Dance of Shiva* by Ananda Coomaraswamy, (Calcutta: Asia Publishing House, 1948), p. 9.

2. Ibid., p. 11.

There are two principal meanings of the term. First, Vedanta is one of the six systems of Indian philosophy. It 'signifies collectively the Upanishads...(which) teach the supreme truth about the jiva and Brahman'³—that man is in essence divine, and not different from Brahman, the Centre and Soul of the universe, and that it is possible to realize this unity and attain perfect fulfilment.

The second meaning of Vedanta, especially for devotees in the West, is that it is the message of Sri Ramakrishna. These two meanings are not unrelated. Underlying the teachings of Sri Ramakrishna are the fundamental principles of Vedanta philosophy. The difference in these two meanings is that while Vedanta as a philosophy deals with its principles, these principles are being put into practice by the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Movement and are helping people everywhere to solve the difficult problems of modern life. The ramifications of this work are immeasurable, touching all aspects of life—personal, social, economic, religious, and so on. Later we will see just how these principles can be utilized in the West. But first let us deal with the question, 'Why Vedanta?'

The question is sometimes asked, 'Why bring Vedanta to the West? Doesn't the West already have Christianity? What is unique about Vedanta?' But the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Movement does not seek to displace Christianity or any other religion, because it accepts all religions as so many paths to God. It actually encourages people to sincerely practise their own religion. The Vedantic Religion, i.e., the *Sanātana Dharma* (the true name of Hinduism), is not one religion among many. It is the spiritual basis of all religions because of its universal principles and its utter lack of insistence on blind belief or dogma. As Swamiji said, referring

to Vedanta, 'Its validity and authority remains unaffected by any limitations of time, place, or person; it is the only exponent of the universal religion for all mankind.'⁴

Another aspect of Vedanta which makes it unique is that it is not just a matter of intellectual understanding; its truths must be assimilated. These truths have actually been assimilated and verified in the lives of innumerable Indian saints and sages—in modern times particularly in the lives of Sri Ramakrishna and his followers. Their lives are a glowing testimony to the truths they proclaim.

The very presence in the West of some of these holy men, monks of the Ramakrishna Order, fills a long-felt vacuum—a lack of living examples of renunciation, of genuine holiness, spirituality and love. There are good people in the West, no doubt, but where else except in India can we find those rare individuals who are completely untainted by worldliness? Where else can we go to find such people who live only for others? I once made such a remark to an official of the Order. I said to him, 'India is the only country in the world that produces such holy persons.' He smilingly replied, 'It's the only thing it produces!'

Another speciality of Vedanta is that, unlike other would-be helpers, it goes to the heart of the matter in helping people to solve their problems. As Swami Satprakashananda has said, 'In the affairs of world reconstruction, Vedanta does not recommend any time-serving patch-work.... A distinctive feature of Vedanta is that it sees and solves the problems of human existence in the light of fundamental truths.'⁵

Vedanta points out that selfishness and self-centredness are the basis of much of the

3. Swami Satprakashananda, *Methods of Knowledge*, (Calcutta: Advaita Ashrama, 1974), p. 307.

4. *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, (Calcutta: Advaita Ashrama, 1990), vol. 6, pp. 182-3. [Hereafter C.W.]

5. Swami Satprakashananda, *World Peace—How?*, (St. Louis: Vedanta Society, 1973), p. 4.

conflict and trouble in life, and that our selfishness comes from our materialistic outlook in which we identify ourselves only with the body and mind and completely neglect our spiritual Self. The essential thing then, is to change our outlook. We must learn to become unselfish, and thus to do what we have been told to do by every religion in the world: to love—unselfishly, disinterestedly. Vedanta gives us the philosophic basis for love—the oneness of all mankind. As Swamiji has said, 'There is but one basis of well-being, social, political or spiritual—to know that I and my brother are one.'⁶ Swamiji has also given us very definite instructions on how to change our narrow selfish outlook; how to learn to love others, seeing the divinity in all.

But there is another factor in the transformation of individuals and societies. It is the coming in contact with superior people, superior cultures. The meeting of different cultures is something that has been going on apparently since the beginning of man's first social organization, and is probably responsible for most of the changes a culture undergoes. Because of today's technological advances, the meeting of different cultures is going on more extensively and more rapidly than ever before, so that, for example, two widely separated cultures are meeting. America is meeting India.

In meeting with a superior culture, people have two choices: they can kill it or ignore it, which has often happened; or they can learn from it. This learning from superior cultures is the way societies progress and people become more civilized, more human, yes, and even become divine if they learn from India. This is what I hope the West will do. I hope that the West will have the wisdom and humility to learn from India.

The distinguished scholar, Ananda Coomaraswamy has perceptively pointed

out what India has to offer to the world. He has written: 'The essential contribution of India then, is simply her Indianness.' To explain this he says further, 'The heart and essence of the Indian experience is to be found in the constant intuition of the unity of all life, and the instinctive and ineradicable conviction that the recognition of this unity is the highest goal and the uttermost freedom.'⁷

Strangely, this devotion to the concept of oneness, instead of producing a culture of dull uniformity, has brought into being a culture of exuberant diversity. The numerous sculptures found in the countless temples of all shapes and sizes; the infinite variety of instrumental and vocal music; the rich multiplicity of folk art; the vast literature of poetry, great epics, Puranas and religious teachings; the fascinating dances and dramas—all these point to a spiritual Reality beyond the seen form, the printed words, the music and speech that are heard.

Perhaps this is an explanation for the strange fact that a culture built on devotion to Oneness produces such a vast diversity. All this diversity is a reflection of the dazzling light of the Divine Oneness. The genuine artist, through his purified vision sees things as they really are—divine. The English poet William Blake has said, 'If the doors of perception were cleansed, everything would appear to man as it is, infinite.'

The Vedantic principle of seeing the divinity in everyone and everything is responsible for the most prominent trait of Indians—their habit of worship, their tendency to bow down to so many things and persons as manifestations of God. This habit is so natural that they aren't aware they have it. It is like the air they breathe. Dr. Coomaraswamy was aware of the importance of worship to Indian culture. He said, 'It was the spirit of worship which built upon the foundations of Buddhist and Vedantic

6. C.W., op. cit., vol. 8, p. 350.

7. *Dance of Shiva*, op. cit., pp. 21-22.

thought the mansions of Indian religion.⁸

People coming to India from the West can't help noticing how worship permeates all aspects of life here. They are struck by the many shrines along the street, in every shop, in some room or corner in every house. Then there are the many different images of gods and goddesses—evidence of another happy trait of Indians—their acceptance of all deities, all religions, all holy persons. They do not differentiate between Moslem, Christian, Buddhist, Hindu, Sikh, Jain, or any other religion's holy persons. They worship at the shrines of all, and observe the holy days of all.

Worship is actually one of the important concepts that the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Movement is bringing to the West. We are all born worshippers; the urge to worship is innate in human beings. Everyone must have noticed the way little children gaze in wonder at something bright, something beautiful. But too often in the West this childlike sense of wonder vanishes when the person comes in contact with a materialistic society. Still that inborn sense of worship must find an outlet somewhere, so most people join the crowd in paying homage to movie stars, football heroes, shady millionaires and other famous people of questionable character. It is a psychological fact that you become like what you worship. If you revere such corrupt persons, you become like them; if you worship God and God-like people, you become God-like.

The Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Movement, by bringing to the West examples of those who have become pure, holy, and worthy of worship, and by teaching people there the value and methods of true worship, is helping them to change the direction of their lives—to become better human beings—more loving, more unselfish.

II

The Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Move-

ment is obviously the principal instrument for bringing Indian thought and culture to the West. However, there are a number of persons not officially connected with this Movement who are bringing the spiritual riches of India to the West by creating there an understanding and appreciation of the depth and beauty of India's culture. Among them is Dr. Stephen Huyler, an American scholar who has devoted his life to the study of Indian folk art. The Smithsonian Institute in Washington D.C. recently featured an unusual exhibit of his collection of terracotta and clay images and vessels, and photographs of beautiful *alpanas* which he calls 'painted prayers'. Dr. Huyler says:

I want to create some sacred space—I want to let Americans see that Hinduism is not an archaic Third World tradition. It has the validity and vitality to be the religion of the twenty-first century.... My work is about spirit, about understanding and conveying the sense of the spiritual in India.... Every aspect of their lives is related to and governed by spirit. That impresses me deeply.⁹

What we can learn most from India, what the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Movement has brought to the world, is Sri Ramakrishna himself. In fact it is Ramakrishna who is responsible for the fact that Westerners today find wonderful things in India—the living religious traditions, the worshipful attitude of the people, the shrines on every corner, in every house, the innumerable holy days, the holy monks and other priceless treasures. Many believe that it was Sri Ramakrishna who prevented India from throwing away its ancient cultural and religious heritage and adopting the culture and religion (or lack of religion) of its British conquerors. The American writer, Richard Schiffman, who called Ramakrishna 'the greatest explorer of the inner realm of the

8. *ibid.*, p. 46.

9. *Hindustan Times*, 14 April 1995; *Statesman*, 15 September 1995.

Spirit the world has known,' said that 'By the beginning of the twentieth century he would be regarded by millions in his native land as the saviour who had preserved a precious spiritual heritage from the clutches of the beast.'¹⁰

Sri Ramakrishna's life and teachings, founded on the ancient *Sanātana Dharma*, the eternal religion of India, are giving to people in the West a concept of life which offers them a reason for living. We are not put here on earth to have a few moments of pleasure, a few moments of pain and then drop into the grave. Sri Ramakrishna tells us again and again that the purpose of life is to have the direct experience of God, who is our innermost divine Self, and thus to attain permanent joy and peace. How do we do this? Sri Ramakrishna has given us many instructions in answer to this question. Perhaps the simplest, and one that anyone can practise is this: 'One should pray to God with sincere longing. God cannot but listen to prayer if it is sincere.'¹¹

Sri Ramakrishna did not only teach, he brought to earth a spiritual power that is working and will continue to work for the good of all people everywhere. We hear of his actually appearing, unsought, to people all over the world. One recent example of

this is found in the story of a young Korean woman who came to Calcutta over a year ago. She had read a Korean translation of *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*. Then one day early in the morning he appeared to her in person. He just sat at the end of her bed and said a few words to her, in Korean of course. The gist of what he said was, 'Practise devotion.' When this fortunate young woman came to Calcutta, she was very eager to see all the places connected with his life and was taken to Dakshineswar, Cossipore, Balaram Mandir, and other places. She was deeply moved.

To summarize:

In the vast interchange between cultures that is going on today, the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Movement is bringing to the West the eternal message of India, Vedanta, which teaches the divinity of man and the unity of all life. It is showing us how to put into practice these fundamental truths and is thus making our lives meaningful. The truths of this ancient Indian philosophy and religion have been assimilated by the Indian people and are responsible for their distinctive character, in which the worshipful attitude is the pre-eminent element. And the vitality of these truths has been proved in modern times in Sri Ramakrishna's incomparable life of renunciation and love. Through the Movement inaugurated by him, and directly too, he is helping people everywhere to proceed along the path to the supreme goal of life—Self-knowledge, God realization. □

10. Richard Schiffman, *Sri Ramakrishna: A Prophet for the New Age*, (Calcutta: Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture, 1994), p. 8.

11. *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*, (Madras: Ramakrishna Math, 1986), p. 703.

Like the wind blowing from flower to flower, men travel from truth to truth, and have thus slowly proceeded towards the one great eternal Truth; this way sooner or later they will all attain the consummation of their life by knowing that which is beyond mind and speech.

—Swami Saradananda, *Precepts for Perfection*, p. 96

A Footnote to 'Life in Karachi Before and After the Birth of Pakistan'

SWAMI MUKHYANANDA

Revered Swami Mukhyānandaji Maharaj, a senior monk of the Ramakrishna Order, was an eye-witness to the events that took place at Karachi during the twilight of the Partition of India. Some details that needed elaboration in the article of Revered Srimat Swami Ranganathanandaji Maharaj, are covered in this article by the learned author.

In the November 1997 issue of the *Prabuddha Bharata*, Swami Ranganathanandaji has described graphically the life and condition in Karachi before and after the birth of Pakistan. I write a few lines as I joined the Ashrama at Karachi under his headship in December 1943 and remained there till the end, when we all flew back to Delhi on 9 August 1948. I briefly replenish the earlier article in regard to the looting of the Ashrama on 6 January 1948, as I was present then, and also clarify that, apart from the three members mentioned in the article (p. 729, col. 1), two of us rejoined the monastic group in April 1948 after the looting and remained till the end.

After the acceptance of the Partition of India, since a few months before and for a few months after the Partition was given effect to, great tension prevailed in the peaceful Karachi city, as Muslim migrants and refugees began to pour in from different places in India to Karachi, which became the capital of Pakistan. Most of the refugees from Delhi had settled near our Ashrama. Every evening there used to be processions and slogan-shouting against India in the big Maidan adjacent to the Ashrama, and some stabbings and killings of Hindus and Sikhs were reported in the city.

Swami Ananyanandaji, who had come to the Karachi Ashrama on transfer from our Madras Centre early in 1947, being sensitive, left for India a few months before the looting

of the Ashrama, and he was then posted by the Headquarters to work in the Kurukshetra Relief Camp.

It may be noted that the looting on 6 January 1948 was a well planned and a wide-spread affair all over the city aimed at driving away the Hindus and the Sikhs and grabbing their property and business places. So, there was not much of killing. Mostly in all the towns and cities of Sindh, Hindus were in a great majority, and all the wealth and business was in their hands. It was especially so in Karachi and Hyderabad (Pakistan), the two big cities, and they were the main targets.

On the day of the looting Swami Ranganathanandaji was in India. At the Karachi Ashrama, there were four monastic members — Swami Sarvagatanandaji and three brahmacharins (all in their twenties): Arjun Maharaj (later Swami Bhavyānanda), Lakshman Maharaj (later Swami Mukhyānanda, i.e. myself), and Parameshwar Maharaj (later Swami Ishānanda). Besides these, there was Shri Chikkanna (a Novice), a young Hindu Malayalee cook, and two Muslim servant-boys from the nearby Muslim village, Malir. Before the looting, Swami Sarvagatanandaji and Arjun Maharaj had gone to the city on some work in the Ashrama car, and only the others were left in the Ashrama. The looting first commenced in the business area and then spread to the whole city. Some half-hour before our

Assistant Secretary of the Ashrama, Shri Manoobhai Dungursee, enquired on the phone about the condition of the Ashrama and informed us of the happenings in the city.

It was all quiet then at our place. But soon enough it suddenly erupted, and the nearby Delhi refugees and *goonda* elements rushed in hundreds in waves and started looting and breaking. They took away everything possible, including vessels, provisions, furniture, cupboards, vehicles, and even flower-pots, etc. Most of the valuable library books were taken away, and Hindu religious books, for them 'unwanted', lay scattered in a damaged condition.

I shall not go into all the details, though they are interesting. The Muslim boys had gone away, and the Malayalee cook bolted as soon as he sensed trouble. We three — Lakshman Maharaj, Parameshwar Maharaj, and Shri Chikkanna — bore the brunt of the attack boldly and without fear. With the help of a Muslim friend from Bangalore, Mr. Makree, who used to visit our library and lived close by, we managed to shift to the residence of a neighbour — a Bengali Muslim migrant family — with whom we had good relations. From there we shifted to the Indian High Commission where we found Hindu and Sikh families crowding in from all parts of the city. We somehow spent the night there in that confusion and excitement. Next day, Swami Sarvagatanandaji and Arjun Maharaj came and met us, and we all went to Shri N.T. Khandawala's place, near the Ashrama, to stay. He was the Manager of the Bombay Steam Navigation Co., at Karachi and was a devotee of the Ashrama. Some others also had taken refuge there. Seeing the confused conditions and difficult circumstances, it was decided that the three of us should leave for India for the time being.

Getting the news of the looting, Swami Ranganathanandaji soon returned to Karachi from Calcutta, and the three of us,

Lakshman Maharaj, Parameshwar Maharaj and Shri Chikkanna, left by a boat of the Bombay Steam Navigation Co. to Okha Port near Dwaraka in India along with many other refugees. We were only with the scanty clothes we were wearing at the time of the looting. Swamis Ranganathanandaji, Sarvagatanandaji and Arjun Maharaj remained in Karachi, in one of our other premises, to help the victims of looting and those in difficult circumstances to go over to India.

We three reached Bombay after visiting Dwaraka and our Ashrama at Rajkot, journey by train being free for refugees. Chikkanna left for his home, and we stayed in our Bombay Ashrama to equip ourselves and to allow things to settle down in Karachi. On 30 January we heard with great shock the tragic news of the assassination of Mahatma Gandhi. On a call from the Headquarters, we soon left for Belur Math near Calcutta, where both of us were initiated into Brahmacharya.

Though there was continuing tension and sporadic violence and killings, both of us, inspired by Vivekananda's ideal of renunciation and service, went back and joined our monastic brothers in Karachi in April 1948. We worked under difficult and risky circumstances as we had often to go out on work with our conspicuous Hindu monastic dress. We remained there and worked along with others till the Ashrama was finally closed. Then all the five of us — Swami Ranganathanandaji, Swami Sarvagatanandaji, Arjun Maharaj, Lakshman Maharaj and Parameshwar Maharaj — flew back to Delhi on 9 August 1948. There, Swami Ranganathanandaji remained as the Head of the Delhi Ashrama, and the rest of us were posted to different centres. I was posted to Advaita Ashrama at Mayavati in the Himalayas as assistant to the Editor of the *Prabuddha Bharata* and stayed on till 1952, when I was initiated as a monk at Belur Math with the present name. □

The VOICE of the Voice or The Eloquence of Swami Vivekananda (A Rhetorical Appraisal)

PROF. B.N. SIKDAR

(Continued from the previous issue)

VII

Again, the difference in meaning and significance of words and phrases in the lexicographics of English and Sanskrit is rather wide though both belong to the Indo-European family. Whereas Vivekananda could, in India, explain a point with a couple of sentences, he required a fairly long introduction in the West (Cf. 'Nature and Man', C.W., vol. 6, p. 33; 'Vedanta', C.W., vol. 3, p. 123). He had to proceed slowly choosing his steps in argumentation. The lectures on 'Maya and Illusion', 'The Real Nature of Man', 'The Atman, Its Bondage and Freedom', 'Maya and Freedom' are obvious illustrations of this procedure.

For the same reason, Vivekananda's instincts make him avoid refined disquisitions or intricate speculative views. Instead, he concentrates on broad issues and evangelical ideas and scriptural texts. Questions about God and the meaning of life (as in 'What is Religion?', 'Reason and Religion', 'Practical Spirituality', 'What Religion is About') and other like themes are treated generally. But all the while he is taking his listeners with him, giving them clear answers. *Clarity* is his aim, and clarity is the primary criterion he has for dealing with metaphysical or moral abstractions. Nobody going through his orations can overlook the fact that the speaker's wish in every speech is to be *factual and lucid*. While explaining tenets of Indian philosophy, no-

body can totally avoid technical terms in Sanskrit. These he uses sparingly in his addresses in the West. When it is unavoidable, he uses the terms *Atman, prana, tapasya, yogi, daya, asana, ishita, maya, shanta*, and others for which no equivalents exist. All orators and rhetoricians from Demosthenes, Aeschylus, Cicero, Aristotle and Quintilian to R.A. Chervit, E. Barry Brummel, and Machken of our days have held that the supreme test of an oration lies in the quality or degree of its persuasiveness. Profundity would scare the lot away. Vivekananda, the orator, is a crowd-pleaser because he strikes a middle course. The Yoga lectures are not only an excellent summing up of some of the profoundest thoughts of the Upanishads, they also constitute very delightful hearing or reading. Siren in Dante (*Divine Comedy*) is born of sleep and dream, and born at first hideous, her transformation into beauty is a purely psychic process; as Dante gazes at her, she is transformed.

VIII

'Steps of Hindu Philosophical Thought', 'The Spirit and Influence of Vedanta', 'The Nature of the Soul and Its Goal'—are discourses in which the extremely confusing and lofty ideas of the Upanishads are made comprehensible and doled out in a form that is easily digestible. In fact, all the Yoga lectures are marked by these virtues. The progression of thoughts follows a linear course as Vivekananda

passes from one phase of his exposition to another. The manner is calmly deliberative, the speeches flow on with a balanced ease and sweet reasonableness. A succession of probings into Vedanta or its samplings, these lectures have delighted as well as instructed both the intellectual and the ordinary for over half a century. They do not breathe the fiery, impassioned note of the other miscellaneous group. The speaker is seen swimming in the deeper waters of his consciousness. Plato had seen that the multitude could not be saved by hidden meanings. The ideas Vivekananda treats of had lain 'full fathom five' deep on the ocean-bed of forgetfulness because the commentators had delighted in the deduction of abstraction from abstraction till rarefied thought flew out of the grasp of any one in his right mind. At this kind of ratiocination of schoolmen, Erasmus laughed in his *Praise of Folly*. Like a deep sea-diver Vivekananda fishes up, strips them of redundant refinements and confusing intricacies, and a straight path is laid through the tangled thickets of an Indian jungle. In these lectures style and conceptual thought fit each other like hand and glove:

It is not given to all of us to be harmonious in the building up of our characters in this life; yet we know that the character is of the noblest type in which all these three—knowledge and love and Yoga—are harmoniously fused.³⁸

Then Vivekananda deals with the relative importance of the three pillars of Bhakti by a comparison with the particular aspects of a bird's anatomy. 'The duty of rhetoric', points out Aristotle, 'is to deal with such matters as we deliberate upon without arts or systems to guide us in the hearing of persons who cannot take it a glance, or complicated argument, or follows a long chain

of reasoning.'³⁹ Lack of this kind of tact or judgement has been responsible for the immediate failure of many an orator. One notable instance is Edmund Burke. The Westminster Hall began to empty as soon as he rose to speak although his speeches concerned momentous issues and were later to influence the course of history. His friend Richard B. Sheridan could hold the Hall spellbound for hours together while dealing with the same issues. He could miraculously adapt his speech to the idiosyncracies of his hearers. Burke spoke from a high plane and was not listened to. Applause erupted both before and after Vivekananda's oration.⁴⁰

IX

Usually, Vivekananda starts on a low key and gradually warms up when he is going to talk on an intricate theme like 'The Nature of the Soul', 'Divine Love', 'The Sannyasin's Ideal and Practice' and 'Blessedness', as also when the theme is likely to be received not in a favourable mood like 'Vedic Religion' or 'Sankhya and Vedanta'. The idea is to overcome resistance in his audience or any disadvantage consequent on the nature of his discussions to follow. In the West the community he faced belonged to an entirely alien culture, and hence the speaker had special difficulties (as we have already noted in sections V, VI). The convictions, knowledge and norms of the two sides—the speaker and the hearer—were separated by a chasm. This chasm had to be bridged bit by bit cleverly, or the speaker would evoke an atmosphere of indifference or hostility. A start, correct from the speaker's point of view on the basis of his own equipment, is apprehended by the hearer on the basis of his (the hearer's). When the two apprehensions do not coincide, communication failure results. Therefore, in order to make the heterogenous

38. C.W., vol. 3, p. 33.

39. *Rhetoric*, 1.2.27.

40. C.W., vol. 3, p. 472.

gathering well-disposed, he begins in a way easy and interesting and delightful to take in. For instances:

1. I am not a Buddhist, as you have heard, and yet I am.⁴¹
2. The analysis of the Sankhyas stops with the duality of existence—Nature and souls.⁴²
3. My religion is to learn. I read my Bible better in the light of your Bible and the dark prophecies of my religion *become brighter when compared* with those of your prophets.⁴³
4. All over the world there has been the belief in the supernatural throughout the ages.⁴⁴

When speaking to an Indian audience, he is *grandiose*:

'This is the ancient land where wisdom made its home before it went into any other country....'⁴⁵

Number one extract above is slightly paradoxical; number two is fairly disarming; number three slides into an opinion (*italics*) almost imperceptibly; and the fourth one is a thoroughly neutral one. All are calculated to put the hearer into the right frame of mind. Demosthenes opens his justly famous oration, 'On the Crown', in this manner: 'I begin, men of Athens, by praying to every God and Goddess, that the same goodwill which I have ever cherished towards the Commonwealth and all of you may be required to me on the present trial....'⁴⁶ The father of oratory knew how religious the Athenians of his day were and appealed to their sentiments to win their

favour.

Occasionally Vivekananda would open with a definition, direct or indirect (e.g. 'Maya and Illusion', 'The Necessity of Religion'); or with a quotation from a well-known poet ('Maya and Freedom'); or a scriptural text ('Unity in Diversity'); or with a question ('Immortality'). The lecture on 'Religion' opens with a sentence ending with '...the manifestation of which we call religion'.⁴⁷ In 'Preparation' to 'On Bhakti Yoga'⁴⁸ we have a definitive quotation which comes three sentences later.

Like a seasoned orator, the young monk often tells the audience immediately after getting up to speak that he is going to approach a complex theme in a thoughtful and ordered way ('Maya', 'The Evolution of the Concept of God', 'Realization'). It is as if he is following Cicero to the letter: 'Our case must first be thoroughly considered and examined as a whole, and all our topics thought out and arranged before we consider what opening to employ.'⁴⁹ The imagery with which Vivekananda opens 'Christ, the Messenger' is drawn from nature; it is an imagery very familiar to the hearers: 'The wave rises on the ocean, and there is a hollow. Again another wave rises, perhaps bigger than the former....'⁵⁰ The hearer awaits in curiosity for the main statement which is given a while later: 'The great soul, the Messenger we are to study this afternoon....'⁵¹

X

When delivering a series as in London (Sept.-Oct. 1896), he may begin with a rough

41. C.W., vol. 1, p. 21.

42. C.W., vol. 3, p. 6.

43. C.W., vol. 1, p. 329.

44. C.W., vol. 2, p. 10.

45. C.W., vol. 3, p. 285.

46. Paragraph 1, tr. C.R. Kennedy.

47. C.W., vol. 2, p. 57.

48. C.W., vol. 4, p. 3.

49. *De Orators*, 76, 318.

50. C.W., vol. 4, p. 138; delivered at Los Angeles, a few kilometres inland from the Pacific Ocean.

51. Ibid.

and ready reference to what has already been explained ('Worshipper and the Worshipped'). Having chosen his introduction, Vivekananda proceeds steadily, step by step, to develop his idea lucidly. One of the devices adopted almost invariably is *the use of a set of pointers* so that he constructs, as he is going on, a clear pattern of exposition. Among these pointers are words/phrases like: *in the first place, to begin with, one more point, what I mean by, in short, take for instance*, and many others, besides the more common *first, secondly*. He would also frequently sum up what he had already discussed: *Such is the nature of the soul*⁵²; *These are the three points, the three angles* that constitute the triangle [of love]⁵³.

Another broad feature of Vivekananda's oratorical art is what may be loosely called the rhetorical/Socratic method of question-and-answer. The supreme seeker of truth in ancient Greece used this method to clear perspectives and direct attention to the development of ideas. The sophists misused it while teaching or practising it, and Socrates condemned it. To which his ex-pupils enjoined that it was the users, not the instrument, that was at fault. Every teacher worth his salt knows the effectiveness of this device practised in India by the sages much earlier than the sophists like Zeno (Yama-Nachiketa episode in *Kāthā-Upaniṣad*). It has been perpetuated by the college system in our days—a system evolved in the West through the trial and error of nearly four centuries. Vivekananda was a product of this system and saw its excellence. To arouse curiosity, to stimulate thoughtfulness and to finally lead the pupil (or hearer) to admit right answers, to eventually support an argument—are some of this system's advantages.

Vivekananda takes the aid of it often, though in a diluted form: 'Who wants God? That is the question. Do you think that all this mass of people in the world want God, and cannot get Him? That cannot be.'⁵⁴ Section three of the discourse, 'The Right Way of Practising Religion' is in its entirety made up of questions; in this lecture alone there are thirty of them. All of them could hardly be classified as rhetorical. They give a sharper focus than assertions. The entire range of Vivekananda's oratory output is full of *orotundity*⁵⁵ (as they are technically called). But unlike the Vedantist or Socrates, never does Swami Vivekananda spin them so fine as to pass beyond the comprehension of the average listener. Some are direct appellant questions in line with 'What is man, that thou art so mindful of him?', for instance, 'What is that in man which makes him live and move, and what becomes of that when he dies?'⁵⁶ Such a question is an invitation to the audience to share his, the speaker's, feelings. There are others to which the answer is obvious: 'Who cares for the joys and vicissitudes of this little world?'⁵⁷ 'Who would like such a man? Where is the difference?'—of such interrogations Shakespeare makes a brilliant use in *Julius Caesar* and many other plays. They make the text dramatic—'Why did ye laugh then, when I said man delights me not?' (*Hamlet*). The effectiveness of these moments in plays as well as in oratory is evident even in reading either of the two forms of a man's expression.

In a few months Vivekananda uses this technique less frequently, as we find it in the series of lectures; as we pass from 'Hints on Practical Spirituality' to 'The Necessity of

52. C.W., vol. 6, p. 26.

53. Ibid., p. 72.

54. C.W., vol. 2, p. 44.

55. Voice or speech characterized by strength, fullness, richness and clearness.—Ed.

56. C.W., vol. 2, p. 155.

57. C.W., vol. 3, p. 18.

Religion', to 'Maya and Freedom' and to 'The Freedom of the Soul'. (These were first published as pamphlets. We presume their form was not subjected to editing. However, we cannot be sure.⁵⁸)

By the use of the question-answer form and of expressions like *yet another question, mark you, what I mean is, take another illustration*, Vivekananda establishes a rapport with his hearers and imparts a semi-formal collaborative tone to the discourse. To exert emphasis he would now and then say: *this is a good point to understand, such is the central ideal of Karma Yoga, the first argument of the Vedantist against this is, it may then be asked*, and so on. These too provide the speaker opportunity to make a proper gesture, to stress the argument. There is another more practical utility of the question and such constructions as noted above: they afford time to the speaker to stare at the hall and collect his thoughts or ponder them to put them on to the people waiting curiously. The science of linguistics calls these organizational terms: *structure-shapers*.

XI

Homiletic prose has, through the ages, found animation⁵⁹, ardour, useful (Cf. the speeches of great Catholic preachers like Bossuet, Bourdalow, Robert Lowth, John Wesley—to name a few). Sublimity in thought and expression is a natural offshoot of animation. Objectivity so much adored by the scientific spirit is, at best, a relative term. 'Let us remember however', says an authority on linguistics, 'that there is no hard and fast line to be drawn between the "language of persuasion" and "the language of fact"'. It is very difficult to say or write anything without adapting some "an-

gle" and without betraying some point of view, even if we want to be objective....⁶⁰ Even the most scientifically inclined human will not leave the heart behind as he/she comes to hear a lecture on ethics or religion, even a dry-as-dust heart will respond to the moral quality and passionate warmth of:

This little earthly horizon of a few feet is not that which bounds the view of our religion. Ours is away beyond, and still beyond; beyond the senses, beyond space, and beyond time, away, away beyond, till nothing of this world is left and the universe itself becomes like a drop in the transcendent ocean of the glory of the soul.⁶¹

Here Vivekananda says that Vedanta studies are an uplifting and exhilarating experience—just that. But he so frames the expression that a poetic touch makes it eloquent and thus more appealing. The lexicon is obviously emotive. Bonamy Dobree opines that in this kind of prose, 'the voice all the time is raised to the level of robust affirmation. There is no hesitancy though there is no lack of control; yet underneath it all there is a current of excitement, the excitement of a man declaring a truth; an almost Pauline fervour'.⁶² Vivekananda's words have a visual as well as an aural significance. We see the orator as it were make a sweeping movement half around in the air with an arm hieratically spread out while he came to the part: 'This little earthly horizon' and bending head backward and thrusting arms out, and palm/fingers in a slow upward movement with every *beyond*. It is as if he is carrying the hall up into a high place and showing them regions where only angels dare. In the cry is discernible a distant echo of his own longing for the delectable heights to which he wanted to soar in trance (*samadhi*) and

58. *Swami Vivekananda in the West: New Discoveries* (Calcutta: Advaita Ashrama,), vol. 4, p. 203.

59. Liveliness or vivacity.—Ed.

60. Randolph Quirk, *The Use of English*, 1975, p. 253.

61. C.W., vol. 3, p. 180.

62. *Modern Prose Style*, 1964, p. 124.

stay for ever. The door to that world was once opened to him for moments to be locked up by his guru who enjoined him to tread the earth instead for the sake of the poor and the miserable.

For the sound effect of the passage, the following from Winston S. Churchill may be read silently aloud: 'Behind them, behind us—behind the armies and the fleets of Britain and France gather a group of shattered states and bludgeoned races'.⁶³ The British Prime Minister was dealing with a very mundane and destructive affair, a war, over the B.B.C., while Ramakrishna's disciple was speaking on a loftier theme. Hence the difference in tone and timbre.

XII

On Socrates's *Panegyric* Aristotle commented that 'men do speak in this strain when they are deeply stirred, and so once the audience is in a like state of feeling, approval of course follows'.⁶⁴ To avoid the clumsiness of repetition of one lexical form, Vivekananda, like Churchill, varies the noun following. The word *beyond* tolls evocatively through the passage and becomes a resonance. In the hand of a lesser artist, the effect would be clanking. It is not a matter of sound alone, an image is at the same time etched on the memory. And the syntax allows the speaker scope for histrionic display. In Lucrece's picture of Troy, Nestor holds his audience by:

Making such sober action with
his hands
That it beguil'd attention, charmed
the sight.⁶⁵

As we follow him from lecture to lecture, Vivekananda's strains strike our ear with

the richness and, to some extent, the variety, of an orchestra. There is the bold burst of 'Day and night say, "I am He." It is the greatest strength; it is religion. "The weak will never reach the Atman."' ⁶⁶ There is the abrupt apostrophe⁶⁷ of 'Strength, O man, strength, say the Upanishads, stand up and be strong'⁶⁸; the forthright shrillness of 'The West is groaning under the tyranny of the Shylocks, and the East is groaning under the tyranny of the priests; each must keep the other in check'⁶⁹; the rapid fusillade of 'What is the goal of life? Is this world the goal of life? Nothing more? Are we to be just what we are, nothing more? Is man to be a machine which runs smoothly without a hitch anywhere?'⁷⁰; the ringing appeal (as if he is striking a harp) of 'If there are holes in this national ship, this society of ours, we are its children. Let us go and stop the holes.'⁷¹

XIII

The voice is nowhere *thin or faint*, Vivekananda never whines, never mutters; like some African tribal's *tom tom* it is always throbbing and resounding, and tremulous; questions, parentheses, inversions, tropes, balance and rhythm⁷² make the orchestration so compelling that the music seems to

66. C.W., vol. 3, p. 26; lecture 'One Existence Appearing as Many' delivered at New York in 1896.

67. Apostrophe means, in Rhetoric, a digression in the form of an address to someone not present, or to a personified object or idea.—Ed.

68. C.W., vol. 3, p. 237.

69. Ibid., p. 158.

70. C.W., vol. 4, p. 238.

71. C.W., vol. 3, p. 227.

72. 'Questions, parentheses, inversions, tropes, balance and rhythm': *Rhetorical question* means a question asked solely to produce an effect or to make an asseveration and not to elicit a reply; *inversion* in rhetoric means reversal of the usual or natural order of

63. Churchill, ed. David Canadine, *Blood, Toil, Tears and Sweat*, 1869, p. 154.

64. *Rhetoric*, tr. W.R. Roberts, III, 7, 1408.

65. *The Rape of Lucrece*, III, l. 1403–04.

echo back from the clouds. Of the murmuring tune of a brook in 'the leafy month of June' (Coleridge) there is little in the orations.

To dwell at length upon the nature and the quality of Vivekananda's English prose would be, at this stage, superfluous. Enough portions of his speech have already been quoted. The affinities with stalwarts of English prose he exhibits will take more than a lifetime to trace, and an abler and younger pen. Its most conspicuous traits lead one to the conclusion that into the making of this style went something of the Ciceronian maturity; of the Senecan antithetical pattern; Hooker's logic and commonsense; of the Jacobean sharpness; the garrulity and spontaneity of *The Anatomy of Melancholy*; the platitude of Thomas Fuller; the ecstatic expansiveness of *Religio Medici*; the breathless exhortation of both Milton's poetry and prose; the flowering eloquence of the Catholic

words, i.e., anastrophe; *trope* means any literary or rhetoric device, as metaphor (the application of a word or phrase to an object or concept it does not literally denote, in order to suggest comparison with another object or concept, as in 'a mighty fortress is our God'); *metonymy* (the use of the name of one object or concept for that of another to which it is related, or of which it is a part, as 'sceptre' for 'sovereignty'); *synecdoche* (a figure of speech in which a part is used for the whole or the whole is used for the part, the special for the general or the general for the special, as in 'ten sail' for 'ten ships' or a 'Croesus' for a 'rich man'); and *irony*, that consists in the use of words in other than their literal sense; *rhythm* in art and literature means a patterned repetition of a motif, formal element, etc. at regular or irregular intervals in the same or modified form. *Rhetorical stress* (not in the list) means a stress required by the meaning of a line, as distinguished from that required by the metre. *Parentheses* and *balance* are obvious.—Ed.

preachers and the British orators of the second half of the eighteenth century. Equally audible are the echoes of thinkers and novelists like Mill, Bentham, Spencer, Carlyle, Dickens, Disraeli and others. Although there is a superfluous resemblance with the Gibbon of the *Decline and Fall*, the English writer's steady beat and unity in diversity are beyond his grasp.

Of the English works Vivekananda's greatest single debt is to the *Authorized Version* of the Bible for language and cadence. From the Old Testament come oriental imagery and florid antiphonal statements, that is, the repetition of the sense of the phrase in different terms; from the New, clarity and suggestiveness rise. Swami Vivekananda was a voracious reader with a computer-like memory and a fine ear. Out of the numerous texts—classical and modern (i.e., 17th to 19th centuries, not excluding Whitman)—, the eloquent Vivekananda tempered for his orations a fiery and flexible instrument. However, one point needs to be stressed again: the matter he spoke on might have been dull to a section of the hearers for whom oriental ideas were foreign but even they found great pleasure in his manner (vide reports in contemporary journals⁷³). Read aloud the orations give the listener one text, read silently they give another.

The comparatively innocent look of extracts printed suggest but a fraction of the sweep and power of the words spoken and enacted within the range of the hearer's visibility and audibility. No wonder Sister Devamata (Laura Glenn) *was transfixed*. That which builds the oration is, outwardly at least, aural, which impact can be received by the ear of imagination in silent reading. If we could receive the visual also through an imaginative vision, the concepts would get across more forcefully. We do not visualize

73. C.W., vol. 2, p. 465-510.

them at all clearly as in a first performance of a good play or in a first reading of a good poem. We must keep our ears open if we want to catch the cadence as Vivekananda puts across his thoughts and ideas, and we must keep our eyes open as well to see him do that. One section of 'My Master' starts with a factual statement: 'If you wish to be a true reformer, three things are necessary.'⁷⁴ With the third sentence thereafter, the upper notes begin to strike our ear, the orator is soaring, from accordion to organ or something close to that. It continues in the same key for a minute or two and drops with, 'If you are...', but rises again to drop suddenly once more but not so low, 'Ours are the duties...' (p. 159).

XIV

Good and fresh metaphors enhance the impact of language, make intangibles or abstractions concrete and bring them out with the aid of imagery. 'The human mind', said W.M. Dixon, 'move the metaphors from the Bible and its living spirit vanishes, its power over the heart melts away.'⁷⁵ Intended to offer insight into a situation or thought, the artist draws pictures with the elements at his disposal. The choice and the manner of use reveals the poet or the novelist or the essayist or the speaker, as a man. It is not easy to simplify and dramatize complex theological problems with figurative expressions.

There is one brilliant example of the use of such expressions by Vivekananda in 'The Practice of Religion': 'We are two thousand monkeys concentrated, each one of us. Monkeys are very curious.'⁷⁶ In the rhetoricity of this observation there is a touch of transcendent quality, a summing up of the unceasing, eternal restlessness of humankind's brain, mind and spirit. Rev. Paul de Man

says that 'rhetoric actually suspends logic, and opens up vertiginous possibilities of referential aberration....'⁷⁷ The image of the monkey pottering and fiddling foolishly is short and sharp and meaningful. The metaphor is illustrative, its excellence lies in the phrases' metalingual⁷⁸ function. The language is certainly not attractive in any way. The referential content is high and, though it is not a poetic line, let us consider the vocal art involved in speaking the sentence.

The sentences are very short and together consist of fourteen words or twenty syllables which the orator had to spill out in proper accentuation. One syllable, one syllable, one syllable, two syllables, two syllables, three syllables ('-ted' will be nearly inaudible in speech after the heavily accented '-tra-') upto the main caesura. Then four monosyllables in contrast to that build up. The period is followed by two syllables ('are' is inaudible), two syllables (one long and the other short), followed by three of which the middle '-ri' is inaudible. The sentences are so cast that it is not necessary for a hearer to listen attentively. To judge the vocal intention involved from the inherent and positional stresses and pauses, they can be heard in the farthest corner of a medium-sized hall with ease and distinctness. There is a spluttering effect deliberately introduced. This is hammer play, harsh and repetitive, to convey an unpleasant truth. In longer sentences (of which there are many, e.g., in his address at Madura⁷⁹) Vivekananda's imagery is multiplicative.

Of these, for the sake of conservation of space, only the shortest and the fewest can be quoted as illustration: 'We shall make mistakes, but they may be angels

74. C.W., vol. 4, p. 158.

75. *The Human Situation*, 1937, p. 63.

76. C.W., vol. 4, p. 247.

77. *Allegories of Reading*, p. 10.

78. *Metalingual* means 'of the relation of language to its cultural context'.—Ed.

79. C.W., vol. 3, p. 177.

unawares.⁸⁰; 'Temples or churches, books or forms, are simply the kindergarten of religion...⁸¹; 'One atom in this universe cannot move without dragging the whole world along with it.'⁸²; 'The fruits have fallen into the ditch, and you are quarrelling over the basket!'⁸³ The metaphor, says Aristotle, 'must not be far-fetched, or they will be difficult to grasp, not obvious or they will have no effect.'⁸⁴ And the scene ought to be set before the hearer's *mind's eye* in appropriate language. The comparisons are easy and pleasant, they are like pools beside the quicksand of abstract reasonings. The hearers could refresh themselves in them. Figurative expressions serve the purpose of increasing impact when they are antithetical⁸⁵ as well, as in 'Bondage and liberty, light and shadow, good and evil must be there....'⁸⁶ 'There is the same pure white light—an emission of the divine Being—in the centre of each, but the glass being of different colours and thickness, the rays assume diverse aspects in the transmission.'⁸⁷

Among other kinds of literary strokes used by Vivekananda to augment the verve or vivaciousness of his commentary is the adaptation of widely current sayings and well-known texts ('It is like trying to fit one coat to all sizes and growths.'⁸⁸; 'One ounce of practice is worth twenty thousand tons of big talk.'⁸⁹; 'Variety is the very soul of life.'⁹⁰; 'Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall

enjoy the earth.'⁹¹); inversion of the word order ('Deep, deep within, is the soul, the essential man...'⁹²), lending sublimity as well as Vedantic flavour by the use of words/phrases typical of the texts ('This bright body, fine body...'⁹³ '...this very Word was God.'⁹⁴).

Exclamations, metonyms⁹⁵, paradoxes, and other minor tropes also abound in the orations (as we have already noted). In each sentence is the consummate mastery of variation in the use of words, the instinctive knowledge of when to thunder like a colossal waterfall and when to drop a pebble in the pool.

His style both in English and in Bengali was peculiarly his own—a compound of many elements but the product is none but his. His reading of the masters (so far his English prose is concerned) may be detected at every step, yet what he learned he digested. Its qualities are *naturalness*, *dignity*, *symmetry* and *harmony*—components of an instrument forged in the furnace of genius when the ground of U.S.A. was under his feet, its misty sky over his head, and the Yankees in the front: an instrument to arouse, to illustrate, to persuade—remarkably fit for oratory and eloquence. To the modern ear the style will sound verbose. In the Eliotian era after the Second World War the English language grew compact and terse. But the prose of Vivekananda's kind could hardly be avoided by anybody who had fed himself on the splendid poetry of the Vedas, the Sanskrit classics, the Old Testament, the orations of Burke, Chatham (William Pitt, 1st Earl of Chatham) and Glad-

80. C.W., vol. 2, p. 37.

81. Ibid., p. 43.

82. C.W., vol. 3, p. 269.

83. C.W., vol. 4, p. 128.

84. *Rhetoric*, II, 1410, 30.

85. *Antithesis* in rhetoric means the placing of a sentence or one of its parts against another to which it is opposed.—Ed.

86. C.W., vol. 1, p. 336.

87. C.W., vol. 4, p. 191.

88. C.W., vol. 1, p. 325.

89. C.W., vol. 3, p. 212.

90. Ibid., p. 131.

91. C.W., vol. 8, p. 93.

92. C.W., vol. 6, p. 31.

93. C.W., vol. 6, p. 20.

94. C.W., vol. 2, p. 41.

95. See footnote 72.—Ed.

stone and the great Catholic preachers.

XV

John Knox's sermon on 'Source and Bounds of Kingly Power' (for which he was arrested and tried) begins: 'As the skilful mariner (being master) having his ship tossed with a vehement tempest, and contrary winds, is compelled often to traverse....' The sentence continues for good many words before coming to a stop though he was speaking to a congregation. And this is how Edmund Burke spoke in the House of Commons: 'The proposition is peace. Not peace through the medium of war, not peace to be hunted through the labyrinth of intricate and endless negotiations, not peace to arise out of universal discord, fomented from principle, in all parts of the empire, not peace....'⁹⁶ Vivekananda was born, lived and learnt in the second half of what is called the Victorian era. Extravagance comes naturally to an oriental mind, and whether in speech or in writing there was little scope for the understated and the closely analytical; unimpassioned plain speaking rarely won a speaker his reputation. In connection with the writings of William James (1842–1910, brother of Henry James), a professor of the Department of Religion in Temple University, remarks: 'The ideal of an absolutely precise logical language was no ideal for one who wanted to speak of this world of flux, the plurality of our experienced world.'⁹⁷ Soul, God, Religion, Vedanta, Reincarnation, Realization—these are not the sort of themes for precise language concerning as they do with Keats's 'dark passages of the mind and the multitudinous psyche of changing morality.'⁹⁸ In 1948 Marx and Engels were writing in a language, which translated into English read: 'let the ruling

classes tremble at a communist revolution. The proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to win. *Working men of all countries, unite.*'⁹⁹ Of such punch sounds as we hear there, in Vivekananda there are hundreds: 'Talk does not count for anything. Parrots can do that.'¹⁰⁰ 'Your body will meet with death, but your soul, never.'¹⁰¹ 'The masters always become slaves before long.'¹⁰² 'Go beyond that if you dare; go beyond law, let the whole universe vanish, and stand alone.'¹⁰³ The hectoring tone in Marx and Vivekananda attuned to radically different purposes wears down the hearer's ability to resist complete agreement. Thomas Carlyle, one of Vivekananda's favourite authors, writes a prose which is vivid, repetitive, cumulative and complex; Vivekananda is a Carlyle in the reverse. The former wants to record on paper the oratory of the preacher. In *French Revolution or Hero and Hero Worship*, Carlyle piles example on example vivid apostrophe on apostrophe ridiculing imagined opposition, venerating the wise. His punctuation and construction in print can never adequately represent the speaking voice; Vivekananda's orations suffer from drawbacks of the contrary kind.

XVI

Since the days of Goebbels people have formed profound distrust of spoken word but Vivekananda's age was not obsessed with limitation, perversity and inadequacy of speech. Thunderous oratory was not regarded with suspicion. The common run now quickly become weary of sustained splendour. To accuse Vivekananda of using rhetoric to embellish his speech is unjustified, for, bereft of rhetoric the glorious de-

99. *Communist Manifesto*.

100. C.W., vol. 4, p. 137.

101. C.W., vol. 1, p. 319.

102. C.W., vol. 8, p. 94.

103. C.W., vol. 3, p. 18.

96. *On Conciliation with the Colonies*.

97. Paul M. Van Buren *Theological Explorations*, 1965, p. 137.

98. *Letting*, 3: 67.

scription in literature would appear insipid.

Consider any long passage in Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra*, distil the rhetorical in it. What remains? The grandeur of

it is gone: 'Alack, sir, no; her passions are nothing but the finest part of pure love: we cannot call her winds and waters, sighs and tears...' (Enobarbus to Mark Antony). □

Fixing the Mind on God-III

(Continued from page 277)

One has to be very careful about the actions one performs and the attitude with which these are performed because if we do any wrong action, we are bound to reap the bad results following therefrom, namely, disquiet. The study material that we consume daily goes to build up and strengthen the thought-process. These are the two means in our hands: *yathā karma yathā śrutam*, what we 'do' and what we 'hear'. We are often careless about the volumes of unhealthy thought taken in through hearing/listening to the output from the modern audio-visual equipment. Communication has been made easier owing to progress in science and technology. However, the screening has become slack and owing to economic considerations much undesirable material gets into these channels. By imbibing these we are only making our task all the more difficult. We should be aware that we have already enough in our mind-set to deal with. It would profit us to hang a sign-board, 'No admittance', and deal with an alert mind all the garbage that is already in the mind. Says Swami Turiyananda, '...never pride yourself on your having gained control over the passions. If you do, they will at once raise their heads. Ever pray to Him, "O Lord, save me from them."'"⁷ Positively put, we should habitually devote some time every day to the study of scriptures, to devotional singing, to hearing the names and

glories of God. A sufficiently thick buffer of such holy thoughts will help a lot towards setting up the mood required for proper meditation. Again, it will be profitable to repeat our dip in the spiritually strengthening and elevating thought of God as many times as possible during the day, preferably at appointed hours, so that the effect of that serene thought lingers in the mind and guides it from taking a false step. How one-pointed towards the ideal the mind should be made is emphasized by Acharya Shankara (*Vivekachudamani*, 325):

If the mind, which is outgoing in its activities, is ever so slightly deflected from the ideal, it goes down and down, even as a playball inadvertently dropped at the head of a staircase goes down bumping from one step to another.' Thus, spiritual life requires isolating oneself from the contact with sense-objects and fixing the mind on the ideal with one-pointedness.

(to be continued)

The sages say that the Reality is one and unchanging. When craving is renounced, unity and diversity cease to exist in the mind.

—*Avadhuta Gita*, I. 22

7. Swami Turiyananda in *Talks*, p. 92.

News and Reports

THE 88TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION

Synopsis of the Governing Body's Report for 1996-97

The 88th Annual General Meeting of the Ramakrishna Mission was held at Belur Math on Sunday the 14th December, 1997 at 3.30 p.m. Revered Swami Gahananandaji Maharaj, Vice President of the Ramakrishna Mission, presided over the meeting. Revered President Maharaj was present for a short time and gave a brief benedictory address. A synopsis of the report of the Governing Body for 1996-97, placed before the members is given below. The report has stated the statistical data about the Ramakrishna Mission activities. By way of additional information it has given a brief outline of the activities of the Ramakrishna Math also.

CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS

The Centenary of Swami Vivekananda's visit to Sri Lanka on his way to India from his first visit to the West was celebrated by Ramakrishna Mission, Colombo, by organizing a mammoth procession, cultural programmes, etc. A bronze statue (9'6") of Swamiji was installed at the Vivekananda Society, Colombo. The Sri Lanka Government brought out a postal stamp to commemorate the event.

Swamiji's triumphal return to India was celebrated in a grand manner by the various centres of the Ramakrishna Order in Tamil Nadu. Led by Sri Ramakrishna Math, Chennai, and Ramakrishna Mission Vidyalaya, Coimbatore, a mammoth series of programmes over a span of 21 days was organized by the centres. Starting on 26 January with a ceremonial reception to Swamiji at Pamban where he had landed a century earlier, the celebration culminated in a farewell to him on 15 February at Chennai Harbour at a spot very near to where he had boarded the ship for Calcutta. This spot has now been officially named Vivekananda Wharf. A convoy with a colourful float, in which was an 8-foot high image of Swamiji seated on a throne, in the lead, followed by monks and devotee-volunteers in cars and vans passed through Rameswaram and several other towns of Tamil Nadu before reaching Chennai. Processions, public meetings and cultural programmes were held at all the places. The response everywhere was spontaneous and overwhelming.

The Ramakrishna Mission Centenary Celebration Committee observed the Centenary of Swamiji's return to Calcutta on the 19th and 23rd

of February. A life-size portrait of Swamiji was brought from Budge Budge to Sealdah railway station in a decorated special train. All along the route thousands of people greeted Swamiji. At Sealdah the portrait was placed in a carriage and was drawn by youths re-enacting the events which took place a century before. A large number of devotees, students and monks followed the carriage in a procession. Meetings were held at several places. On the 23rd, a public meeting was held which was attended by thousands of people.

The event was also celebrated by a number of our centres all over the country with public meetings, seminars, symposiums, sports meets, musical and drama performances, literary and quiz competitions, publication and free distribution of books and booklets, etc.

Sri Ramakrishna Math, Chennai, observed its own centenary with a variety of programmes.

NEW DEVELOPMENTS

During the year under review, a new centre was opened at Shivanahalli, Bangalore, for carrying on rural and tribal welfare activities. The Bhojeshwar Bungalow at Porbandar, where Swami Vivekananda stayed for nearly four months in 1891-92 during his *parivrajaka* days, was formally handed over to the Ramakrishna Mission by the Chief Minister of Gujarat. The new education complex at our centre at Viveknagar (Amtali) was dedicated and a new medical unit under the same centre was inaugurated at Dhaleswar. New dispensary buildings were declared open at our centres at Limbdi and Patna. A permanent exhibition on Swami Vivekananda and Rural Development work was inaugurated at our centre at Morabadi, Ranchi.

A new temple of Sri Ramakrishna was dedicated at our centre at Bhubaneswar. A marble bas-relief of Swami Vivekananda was installed at our centre at Rajkot. Foundation-stone was laid for a new office-cum-booksales building at Ramakrishna Advaita Ashrama, Kalady. The Old Madras Road, Bangalore, was renamed Sri Swami Vivekananda Road by the Bangalore City Corporation. The Vedanta Society of Western Washington, Seattle, U.S.A., started a quarterly journal, *Global Vedanta*.

ACTIVITIES

Relief and Rehabilitation: In the year under report, the *Ramakrishna Mission* undertook extensive relief and rehabilitation programmes involving an expenditure of Rs. 49.36 lakhs. Besides, relief articles worth Rs. 8.29 lakhs were distrib-

uted.

The following *Primary Relief* operations were conducted in different places in which 3,57,385 people were served: *Cyclone Relief* in Andhra Pradesh, *Distress Relief* in West Bengal and Meghalaya, *Fire Relief* in West Bengal, Meghalaya and Andhra Pradesh, *Flood Relief* in West Bengal, Rajasthan and Andhra Pradesh, *Medical Relief* in West Bengal. Besides, massive *Flood Relief* was conducted by our Dhaka and Dinajpur centres in Bangladesh.

Under the *Rehabilitation Project*, an integrated rural development programme is being conducted by the Headquarters in Ausa Taluk of Latur District, Maharashtra, in collaboration with Lokasiksha Parishad, Narendrapur, and Excel Industries, Mumbai. The major activities during last year were construction of a spill-check dam, training in drip irrigation, waste-water management, poultry-farming, community sanitation, etc. Soil-testing, afforestation and cultural activities were also undertaken.

The Batticaloa sub-centre of Ramakrishna Mission, Colombo, undertook construction of 27 low-cost houses for sanitary labourers.

During the same period the *Ramakrishna Math* conducted *Cyclone*, *Distress* and *Drought Relief* in Gujarat, *Fire Relief* in West Bengal and Orissa, and *Flood Relief* in Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Tamil Nadu and West Bengal. In all, a sum of Rs. 3.23 lakhs was spent and 11,419 families were served.

Welfare Activity: The *Mission* spent a sum of Rs. 126.99 lakhs by way of providing scholarships and stipends to a large number of students, medical aid to poor patients, and monetary help to aged and destitute men and women. This was in addition to the huge sums spent by our educational institutions for the benefit of poor students and by our hospitals and dispensaries for the treatment of poor patients.

Medical Services: The *Mission*, during the year under review, worked through its 9 hospitals with 1,714 beds (72,794 in-patients and 21,51,524 out-patients), 68 out-patient dispensaries (20,78,702 cases) and 22 mobile dispensaries (7,32,994 cases), mostly in rural and tribal areas, spending a sum of about Rs. 14.76 crores.

Under the *Math* centres, there were 5 hospitals with 353 beds serving 15,391 in-patients and 2,31,104 out-patients, 25 dispensaries (6,34,780 out-patients) and 7 mobile dispensaries (85,245 cases).

The *Mission* and the *Math* centres conducted several service camps: The *Mission* conducted 6 eye-camps, 3 dental camps, a charitable dispensary (during the Magh Mela), 2 old age homes, and 4 Nurses' Training Centres (Seva Pratishthan, Vrindaban, Itanagar and Lucknow).

The Vivekananda Institute of Medical Sciences of Seva Pratishthan conducted postgraduate studies and research in medicine. The *Math* conducted 2 eye-camps, 8 dental camps, an old age home at Barisha and a Nurses' Training Centre at Thiruvananthapuram.

Educational Work: Through its educational institutions of various types the *Mission* aimed at imparting man-making and character-building education. True to the tradition, the academic results of the *Mission's* educational institutions were also brilliant. In 1996-97 the *Mission* had 5 degree colleges, 4 teachers' training colleges, 5 junior basic training institutes, 12 higher secondary schools, 28 secondary schools, 129 schools of different grades, 4 polytechnics, 7 junior technical and industrial schools, 84 hostels and students' homes, 5 orphanages, 2 institutes of agriculture, 1 school of languages, 1 computer centre, 1 blind boys' academy, 1 librarianship training centre, 4 rural development training institutes, and 146 non-formal education centres, night schools and the like. The total number of students in all these institutions was 1,15,173 of whom 33,490 were girls. The *Mission* spent a sum of Rs. 42.95 crores for this purpose.

Under the *Math* centres 10,619 students were taught in 1 B.Ed. college, 1 Sanskrit college, 1 school of languages and in a total of 30 schools, students' homes and other educational institutions.

Spread of Spiritual and Cultural Ideas: This was accomplished through a large number of reading-rooms, lectures and seminars, films of religious and cultural value, regular classes, public celebrations, occasional exhibitions, etc. The publication departments of the *Math* and the *Mission* centres did appreciable work in this regard. The *Math* centres maintained temples, organized lectures, retreats and devotees' meets. Thousands of people were inspired to accept higher values of life by coming into contact with different *Math* and *Mission* centres.

Work in Rural and Tribal Areas: Rural and tribal welfare work has come to occupy a prominent place in the scheme of services rendered by the *Mission*. With its limited funds and workers, the *Mission* has been doing its utmost for serving the poor and backward people as also tribal people in different parts of the country. This is accomplished in three ways:

- (a) through our centres located in rural and tribal areas primarily set up for this purpose,
- (b) through our urban centres, which have taken up development projects in rural and tribal areas, and,
- (c) through our educational and medical institutions in urban areas where rural folk form a

significant percentage of the beneficiaries.

The *Mission* spent a sum of about Rs. 6.25 crores specifically for rural and tribal development work, apart from the huge expenditure incurred by the educational and medical institutions located in rural and tribal areas.

The rural development training institutes at Narendrapur, Narainpur, Saradapitha (Belur) as also the Krishi Vigyan Kendra and Divyayan at Ranchi (Morabadi) trained youths for work in rural and tribal areas in modern methods of agriculture, dairy and poultry farming, etc. The centre in Ranchi (Morabadi) has taken up massive rural development project by way of extension and follow-up of the training programmes of Divyayan. The centre at Narendrapur is conducting numerous integrated rural development projects in several districts of West Bengal. The centres at Cherrapunjee, Shillong, Along, Narottam Nagar, Itanagar and Narainpur have won the love and esteem of the tribal people of the respective areas for their educational and medical work. There was further advancement in the extensive tribal welfare projects undertaken by the Narainpur centre in the Abujmahar area of Bastar District, Madhya Pradesh. The centre in Mumbai continued its comprehensive rural development project at Sakwar with vocational training, medical service and other programmes.

The *Math* centres at Bangalore and Mysore undertook integrated rural development projects. *Math* centres in rural and tribal areas also conducted medical and educational service activities.

Under the *Pallimangal* activities of the Headquarters, a pilot project, initiated in 1980, continued in the villages in and around Kamarpukur and Jayrambati in West Bengal, conducting soil analysis, training for destitute and handicapped women in weaving, training in spinning in a mini jute mill, and medical services including eye-camps. Eighteen low-cost houses were built at Jayrambati.

The statistics relating to these institutions are included under 'Medical Services' and 'Educational Work'.

Foreign Work: The *Mission* centres in Fiji, France, Mauritius, Singapore, Sri Lanka and Switzerland carried on cultural work in addition to spiritual ministration. Some educational work was also conducted by a few of them.

In the *Math* centres in Argentina, Canada, Japan, Netherlands, United Kingdom, Russia, and the United States of America our Swamis gave lectures at the centres and also in colleges, universities, etc. on invitation, conducted religious classes, observed religious festivals with special worship, organized seminars and held

retreats. Some of them also brought out useful publications on philosophical subjects and spiritual teachings.

The 8 *Math* and 8 *Mission* centres in Bangladesh were engaged in conducting religious classes, discourses, daily worship and prayer, dispensaries, schools, students' homes, libraries and relief work such as distribution of food, clothing, etc.

Excluding the Headquarters at Belur Math, the *Mission* and the *Math* had 83 and 78 branches respectively, in India and abroad together.

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION CENTENARY

The inaugural function of the year-long celebration of the centenary of the Ramakrishna Mission was organized in Calcutta by the Central Committee on the 1 May 1997, a detailed of which will be given in the next year's report. □

CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS OF THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION AND SWAMIJI'S RETURN TO INDIA

The *Obschestvo Ramakrishni-Centr Vedanti, Moscow*, celebrated the Centenary of the Ramakrishna Mission by conducting a special worship of Sri Ramakrishna on 1 May 1997 followed by a meeting held at the Institute of Oriental Studies on the 15th. Another meeting sponsored by Jawaharlal Nehru Cultural Centre was arranged at the Indian Embassy on 16 September. An informative booklet containing articles by eminent Russian thinkers, a book *Life According to Vedanta*, and a video cassette describing the Ramakrishna Mission and its achievements were brought out. Meetings were organized in several other cities also to celebrate the occasion.

The **Ramakrishna Math, Kankurgacchi**, conducted a four-day programme from 11 to 14 September with two public meetings addressed by distinguished persons, a youth convention chaired by Revered Swami Smarananandaji Maharaj, General Secretary of the Ramakrishna Math and Ramakrishna Mission, and a Bhakta Sammelan (devotees' meet) in which the message of benediction from Revered President Maharaj was read out by Revered Swami Gahananandaji Maharaj, Vice President of the Ramakrishna Order.

The **Ramakrishna Mission, New Delhi**, organized a talk on 'Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Movement' by Revered Swami Ranganathanandaji Maharaj, Vice President of the Ramakrishna Order, a youth conference, competitions in quiz and painting, a spiritual retreat, and a seminar on 'Practical Vedanta—Its Concept and Application'. Swami Ranganathanandaji Maharaj inaugurated the celebrations on 21 September and

also released a souvenir brought out on the occasion. Many distinguished persons participated in the function.

The **Ramakrishna Mission Ashrama, Morabadi, Ranchi**, organized a Sarva Dharma Samanvaya meeting presided over by Revered General Secretary Maharaj on 11 September in which representatives of various religious faiths took part. A seminar on 'Role of Education in National Reconstruction in the Light of Swami Vivekananda's Teachings' was held on the 14th in which eminent scholars and educationists participated.

The **Ramakrishna Mission T.B. Sanatorium, Ranchi**, along with **Sri Ramakrishna Seva Sangha, Ranchi**, held a function on 30 and 31 August. Public meetings were held on both days and prizes were distributed to the winners in different competitions. A ballet based on the life of Swami Vivekananda also formed a part of the two-day programme.

The **Ramakrishna Mission Ashrama, Cherapunjee**, organized a variety of programmes on 12 August. A booklet *U Swami Vivekananda — U Nongnuma Ki Samla* in Khasi was released and a medical camp was conducted in which 190 patients were treated.

The **Ramakrishna Mission Vivekananda Siriti Mandir, Khetri**, held speech competitions for students and a seminar for teachers in the schools and colleges of Khetrinagar and Khetri on 29 August and 5, 10 and 11 September.

At **Ramakrishna Math and Ramakrishna Mission, Bhubaneswar**, Swami Gahananandaji Maharaj inaugurated the second phase of the celebrations held from 29 Aug. to 1 Sept. A public meeting, a Bhakta Sammelan and discourses formed parts of the four-day programme.

The **Ramakrishna Math and Ramakrishna Mission Sevashrama, Allahabad**, organized the second phase of the centenary celebrations from 6 to 28 September with competitions in recitation and elocution, an inter-religious conference, and distribution of prizes to the winners in the competitions.

The **Ramakrishna Mission Ashrama, Puri**, organized meetings on 5 and 6 September presided over by Swami Gahananandaji Maharaj.

In twenty-six institutions in and around Limbdi, monks of **Ramakrishna Mission, Limbdi**, spoke on the life and message of Swamiji and the ideals and activities of the Ramakrishna Mission.

The **Ramakrishna Math, Jamtara**, held a six-day function from 18 to 23 September and a one-day retreat in which about 500 devotees took part.

The **Ramakrishna Math, Hyderabad**, organ-

ized a day-long devotees' convention on 2 October in which Swami Ranganathanandaji Maharaj delivered the benedictory keynote address. More than 1300 devotees attended the programme.

The **Ramakrishna Mission Vidyapith, Deoghar**, held a public meeting, presided over by Swami Gahananandaji Maharaj, on 26 September, which was attended by a large number of students, teachers and local people.

The **Ramakrishna Mission, Port Blair**, conducted a seminar at Mayabunder, about 300 kms from Port Blair, on 16 September. An elocution competition and public meetings were also held at different places.

Swami Smarananandaji Maharaj and other distinguished persons addressed meetings held by the **Ramakrishna Mission Ashrama, Narendrapur**, on 3 and 4 September. A large number of students, staff, devotees and monks attended the programme.

The **Ramakrishna Mission Vivekananda Ashrama, Raipur**, arranged public lectures on the 4 and 5 October.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA MEDAL

An organization '*Nivedita Vratī Sangha*' has donated Rs. 50,000/- to create an endowment at the **Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture, Calcutta**, for the award of a *Swami Vivekananda Medal* to a person or an institution for outstanding work in disseminating the ideas of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda. The award is to be made on the basis of different zones in India starting with the Eastern Zone.

CHANGE IN ADDRESS

The **Ramakrishna Mission Ashrama, Asansol**, has moved all its activities (except the school) to its new premises at: Kanyapur Link Road, Asansol, West Bengal 713 304. The temporary monks' quarters and boys' hostel built on the new land were inaugurated by Swami Gahananandaji Maharaj on 8 September 1997.

SUB-CENTRE

A sub-centre of the Vedanta Society of Southern California, Hollywood, has been started at Ridgely Manor, New York State, sanctified by Swami Vivekananda on three occasions: twice in 1895 and once, for ten weeks, in 1899. The address of the centre is: *Vivekananda Retreat, Ridgely, PO Box 321, Stone Ridge, New York 12484-0321, USA*. E-mail: sananda@ridgely.org.

EDITOR, THE VEDANTA KESARI

With effect from January 1998, Swami Brahmeshanandaji Maharaj has taken over the editorship of *The Vedanta Kesari* from Swami Tyaganandaji Maharaj, who very ably conducted the Journal for a long period of eleven years (1987-1997). □